

# RELIGION IN LIFE

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## Salvation

**SALVATION** is seeing that God is good, and by his grace and mercy and help becoming a part of that goodness.

*In the end we are saved—from ourselves, from the stain of life—less by our faith in God than by his faith in us. Our faith may at any moment fail, but his faith, his love, never fail, never let go. Lost things will be found at last; there is no such thing as Divine defeat.*

*To me the soul of all religions, and the hope of all souls, the first truth and the last, without which there is no hope for anyone, here or hereafter, is the love of God as Jesus taught it and lived it out in his life. To put our trust in that love is the first and final wisdom of life.*

*At long last love never faileth, if it is a love that "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things"—even the wild heart of man must in the end bow to it, rejoice in it, worship and serve it. What else do we need as the basis of life and the hope of our souls?*

—Joseph Fort Newton in *Everyday Religion*.  
Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950, pp. 172-3.

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# Thirty Years of New Testament Study

CHARLES H. DODD

**THIRTY YEARS** of any intellectual discipline is a period short enough to be grasped as a whole, and perhaps long enough to permit a fair estimate of the dominant direction in which thought has been moving. Thirty years back from 1949—and we are scarcely out of 1949—brings us to a year which, at least for Europeans, marked a real epoch. In 1919 we were beginning to take breath after four years of war. When we were free once more to look round the theological landscape at leisure, we found it had changed surprisingly. Familiar and formidable landmarks no longer dominated the scene. New paths were opening up. This was not least true, certainly, in the field of biblical studies, including the study of the New Testament. It should be possible to indicate in retrospect certain trends, new in 1919, which, as I now see it, proved significant in the ensuing thirty years. It is, you will understand, only one man's view that I am giving, limited by his individual, national, and ecclesiastical standpoints; and the principle of relativity is at least as applicable here as in physics.

I shall make no attempt at a systematic or comprehensive survey of the whole field. If I were attempting anything of the kind, I should certainly have to draw special attention to the remarkable revival in textual criticism of the New Testament, which is by now fairly embarked on a new period of constructive achievement comparable with the period which culminated in Westcott and Hort, and was then succeeded by a long pause. The center of this fresh advance, it is now clear, will be located in this country, which has already made such outstanding contributions to the exploitation of new evidence and the revaluation of old. But textual criticism is a highly specialized discipline, in which, truth to tell, I am not entirely at home.

Nor shall I say much about new work in linguistic studies. The most spectacular advances in this field, indeed, were made in the genera-

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tion immediately preceding the period of the great wars. It is, however, pertinent to my purpose to remark that the great monument of linguistic scholarship in our generation, Gerhard Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament*, represents a new approach, which is so characteristic of the period that it merits some brief consideration. The articles in the *Wörterbuch* rest upon a basis of pure philology, consolidated by the masterly researches in the field of Hellenistic Greek which so enlarged our knowledge in the period before the wars. But their aim is to place each word used by the New Testament writers within a large context, determined by the Old Testament (in its Greek translations), by Hellenistic writings contemporary with primitive Christianity, and above all by the New Testament itself taken as a whole; and within this context to define not merely the lexical meaning of the word, but its significance as a vehicle for a living and creative movement of thought. Some of us may think that the resolute effort to find a specific theological significance in *every* word has sometimes led the learned authors into some forcing of the evidence. However, the aim is not only entirely commendable in itself, but is resulting in a work which offers the biblical theologian a genuinely scientific foundation for his study of New Testament thought; because it sets out to tell him precisely, and not merely suggestively, just what the Greek words meant which the authors of the New Testament used, in the context in which they used them, and in relation to the Christian movement as a whole.

Already, therefore, in this connection, we have glanced at certain characteristics of New Testament studies since 1919 which will become clearer as we proceed.

# I

Those of us in Great Britain who had always kept more or less in touch with German work in biblical studies had looked forward to the resumption of relations after the Four Years War. When it came, we were at first somewhat disconcerted. Our friends seemed to have lost overnight all interest in the meticulous documentary analysis—*Quellenkritik*, as they called it—in which they had been our guides and examples. The study of the Gospels no longer presented itself to them as "the quest of the historical Jesus." They had even coined the word *Historismus* as a term of reproach. They insisted, with an iteration which threatened to turn a profoundly important maxim into a cliché, that the Gospels were written "from faith to faith." They were not histories; they were not biographies; they were works of edification and religious propaganda, to be studied frankly as such. In some quarters, what would have seemed

to many liberal theologians of the earlier period an extravagantly skeptical attitude in historical criticism went with a dogmatic rigidity in theology which to our minds savored of fundamentalism.

In Great Britain the pendulum does not swing with such violence as in Germany; and we took our Karl Barth in water. Yet we were open to the influence of the new movement of thought on the Continent just because a not altogether dissimilar change of orientation had been taking place among ourselves. It worked more obscurely, less self-consciously, with more reserve—as is perhaps our wont; but it worked. Though events in the great world in some measure separated the different national groups of scholars, we had after all shared in a common movement of the *Zeitgeist*.

To come down to particulars, the new tendency revealed itself, within the field of New Testament studies, primarily in relation to the Gospels; for the study of the Gospels is always the most sensitive point. In place of the older methods of documentary criticism the new school offered a method which they called—rather infelicitously, I have always thought—*Formgeschichte*. I well remember, when my lamented friend Martin Dibelius first visited England after the Four Years War, how we wrestled together with the title of his lectures, which was also the title of his well-known book—*Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*—in the attempt to render the intractable term into English. The attempt met with poor success. The expression "Form Criticism" which became current has never, I think, been felt to be entirely satisfactory. *Formgeschichte*, I need hardly remind you, is a method in which the critic abstracts temporarily from the thought or content of the passage before him, to concentrate attention upon the form, or pattern, into which it falls—as for example, in the Gospels, the forms of biographical anecdote, miracle story, dialogue, parable, and so forth. These forms, according to this school, bear unmistakable marks of a communal tradition transmitted orally. These critics, however, were a little unjust to themselves in emphasizing the exclusively formal aspect of their work. In general they assume, first, that there is a relation between form and content which allows, under due control, of inference from the one to the other, and, secondly, that form is largely determined by *Sitz im Leben* ("setting in life"); that is to say, by the actual, living situation in which the material took shape.

The most important service, to my mind, which the form critics have rendered to our studies is their insistence upon the living situation in the history of the church. We try to watch the early Christian communities at work, shaping for their corporate needs the material which

came to be embodied in written Gospels. We are no longer so greatly interested to identify individual figures of the apostolic age supposed to stand behind particular Gospels or Gospel sources—Peter behind Mark, the apostle Matthew (as some liked to think) behind the source "Q," or Philip and his prophesying daughters behind the tradition peculiar to Luke. Such identifications are no doubt possible, and there is no harm in entertaining them as speculations, though, except for Peter, there is little that could be called evidence in their favor. But whoever may have been the individual bearers of tradition, we are fairly sure that the stories in the Gospels had been told and retold many times within the early Christian communities; and they must have shaped themselves, even without definite intention, to the needs of these communities, worshiping, preaching to the outside world, providing instruction for their members, and putting on record maxims and precedents for their guidance in recurrent problems of individual and social behavior. The study of the Gospels thus leads to the endeavor to picture to ourselves the communal life of the early church as realistically as we possibly can.

Hence, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles acquire a new importance for the student of the Gospels; and in particular the epistles of Paul. The nineteenth century—so to denominate the period which really ended in 1914—in accordance with the individualist and romantic spirit of the age, was intensely interested in individualizing the personalities known to us in ancient history; and Paul the man, with his generous self-disclosure in his extant letters, was the subject of endless studies—to our great profit. But from the newer point of view it is precisely the nonindividual elements in the epistles that are particularly valuable. There are places where the apostle expressly claims to be the mouthpiece of corporate traditions and corporate judgments; and even when he does not say so, the sensitive reader will often be aware that in reading the epistles he is overhearing the kind of thing that Paul and many others were constantly saying to one another or to outsiders in the ordinary, daily-recurrent situations of their communal life. He is, in fact, looking into a mirror which reflects with singular clarity the living situation in which the Gospel tradition was being transmitted when as yet there were no written Gospels. The explicit citation of the common tradition of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ in I Cor. 15, and the appeal to "commandments of the Lord" in chapters 7 and 9 of the same epistle, are familiar examples, and they serve as pointers to a good deal more.

## II

As our study proceeded, we came to realize that we were wrong in drawing a sharp division between the period of oral tradition and the period of literary composition, as if the one gave place to the other at a given point. It is a fact that provokes reflection, that Bishop Papias of Hierapolis, well on in the second century, observed that if he ever had the chance of conversing with people who from their own memories could tell him by word of mouth what apostles or elders had taught, he greatly preferred it to any written record. I do not know whether Eusebius was right in calling Papias "a man of very small intelligence," but I am sure there were many like him in this particular preference. It is a sign of the intimacy and vivacity of the fellowship of the church. The main current of its life from day to day flowed in the channels of living speech. Early Christians, for example, did not publish volumes of verse: they "spoke to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," as Paul has it. Similarly, they were not primarily concerned to publish books about Christ. They preferred to speak to one another about him, and to "bear witness" (to use their favorite expression) about him to outsiders by the spoken word, which it was their pride to utter with *parrhesia*—freedom and boldness of *speech*.

Now and then, here and there, various exigencies led to portions of the living tradition being crystallized in writing. Where such writings have survived—and they are fewer than we could have wished—we have fixed points of inestimable importance for our study. We scrutinize these writings patiently and minutely, word by word and sentence by sentence, not simply as literary texts (as, for example, generations of scholars have scrutinized the texts of the Aristotelian *Organon*); and not only for the light they throw upon the minds of their individual authors, important as this may be; but also because they may illuminate a whole area of the life, faith, and experience of the Christian society in its formative age. But alongside the growing literary activity of the church the oral tradition went on, and long continued to be an influential factor.<sup>1</sup>

The general recognition of this fact has corrected what I may describe as the excessive literary bias of much nineteenth-century criticism; I mean, the tendency to think of the New Testament as essentially a

<sup>1</sup> I ought to add, that when I speak of oral tradition I do not mean to exclude the possibility that early Christians made use of notes written on tablets or on scraps of papyrus as *aide-mémoires*. From all that we know of practice in Hellenistic circles I should hold it extremely probable that they did; and I believe that fly-sheets originally written for this purpose may have proved serviceable to the writers of the Gospels; but at the time they were no more than auxiliary to a tradition essentially oral.



corpus of literature forming a series in which one document depends upon another, the earlier influencing the later. Some items in the series, it was recognized, were missing, but by careful documentary analysis, it was believed, they might often be recovered, or reconstructed. The books of the period are stiff with the names of such hypothetical documents—"Q," *Urmarcus*, Proto-Luke, the Johannine *Urschrift*, the multifarious documents postulated as sources for Acts, and so on. That some of these hypothetical documents may have existed I should not think of denying; I am even old-fashioned enough to believe that some such document as critics have called "Q" did exist as a source for Matthew and Luke, though perhaps not precisely Harnack's "Q." But I think we are being led to see that the whole picture is a little out of focus. The primitive church was not such a bookish community as that: it was neither a graduate school nor a literary coterie. It was a rapidly growing society of varied membership, bent upon a great task, with a singularly vigorous corporate life, sustained by a lively personal intercourse among its members, and guided by a strong, carefully guarded common tradition which found expression in a variety of ways, most of them oral rather than literary. Those of its members who wrote, wrote consciously out of this common, widely-shared tradition, however fresh and individual might be their treatment of it.

If some such picture of the situation in the early church is accepted, it leads us to reconsider some critical judgments which had passed almost into dogmas. It is clear that the evidence which has been held to prove the dependence of one document upon another must in some cases be insufficient for such proof, if serious allowance is made for the pervasive influence of a common tradition. For example, the resemblances between I Peter and certain Pauline epistles do not appear for the most part such as necessarily to prove its dependence upon them, if there is no longer any presumption that the main channel of continuity in early Christianity was the written word. The question of dependence is at any rate more open than we had supposed. Again, the general belief that where the narrative of the Fourth Gospel runs parallel with that of the Synoptics we may safely conclude that they were being used as sources rests upon no secure foundation, if it is true that all four evangelists—not to speak of some noncanonical writers—were dipping into a large common reservoir of oral traditions about the deeds and words of Jesus—traditions which had already taken on the forms or patterns to which form criticism draws attention, though their wording had not yet been fixed by being committed

to writing. There remain a few places in John where apparent verbal echoes, or subtle allusions, or complex phenomena of arrangement, demand delicate examination, and here it may be we shall find solid evidence for a limited degree of dependence. It is more like the specific, and precise, kind of evidence which convinced most critics that Matthew is dependent on Mark; and yet even here it seems we must be prepared to find that Matthew is not at every point dependent so directly and exclusively upon the earlier Gospel as we had assumed. The influence of oral tradition seems in some cases a better hypothesis to explain Matthew's curious divergences from Mark than the "editorial activity" to which the earlier critics allowed so much scope.

### III

It would be possible to illustrate more extensively the way in which the new approach is reopening many critical questions. But I want now to say something about the attempts which have been made, and are being made, to recognize and describe the actual contents of the oral tradition, regarded as a function of the life of an active and growing community. Down to the present time we may say that four main elements in it have been recognized.

1. First, probably in importance and certainly in time, came the attempt to fix the content of the Christian gospel itself as it was proclaimed at the earliest date accessible to our researches. It may, I think, fairly be said that a considerable measure of agreement has been attained upon this point, and that continued examination of our documents is showing more and more clearly how this common and primitive *kerygma* lies behind almost every New Testament writing, and is thus confirming the importance of it in the life, thought and activity of the early church.

2. Secondly, there is material which appears to be associated with the church's system of instruction for converts, largely of the nature of ethical precepts and admonitions. In the earlier works of our period this seems to have been dealt with somewhat slightly, but latterly it has attracted more attention. We seem to be on the way to discovering a broad general pattern of precepts and admonitions which may with great probability be taken to represent the common tradition of primitive *catechesis*, or instruction of converts. It is necessary here to speak with caution. We should almost certainly be wrong if we suggested (as I fear some of us have incautiously seemed to suggest) that what we have, for instance in I. Thess. 4 and 5, or in Col. 2 and 3, or in certain passages of I Peter, actually is an abstract from the catechism in use in the churches



concerned. We should be safer in supposing that the authors of these epistles are *alluding* to familiar forms of catechesis—familiar to themselves because they were constantly using them in their work, and familiar to their readers because they had received instruction along these lines on becoming members of the church. They were consequently a convenient means of reminding the readers of what they had been taught, as well as a convenient setting for any further instruction which the writer wished to add. It is a common traditional *form* or pattern we are dealing with, which individual teachers could use as a framework for instruction, filling it out at will according to the needs of the situation. This view is, I believe, borne out by an examination of the ways in which such passages are introduced, and it is analogous to the use of the general pattern of *kerygma* as a framework to be filled out variously at will.

3. Thirdly, there is the use of passages from the Old Testament by New Testament writers. It may seem surprising that I should include this under the general heading of oral tradition. Surely here, if nowhere else, we know for certain that our authors were following a written source—the Holy Scriptures themselves. That is of course true. But the phenomena of quotation in the New Testament are diverse and often puzzling. It is perhaps only in a minority of passages that they suggest a bookish process of reference and verification. More often the mode of quotation, or allusion, suggests rather that the man had the Bible “in his head,” and used its language spontaneously and with considerable freedom. But if this is so, it is also clear that the selection of passages, and the method of applying them, were not left entirely to individual choice, but were in general governed by principles, or even rules, observed by most of our authors. Here and there an author will quote, or echo, a passage just because it comes into his head. But there are certain well-defined portions of Scripture—such as Isaiah 6-9, the Second Isaiah, parts of Zechariah, a certain group of Psalms—which the most diverse New Testament writers lay under contribution again and again, while some other books of the Old Testament hardly appear at all.

Earlier critics put forward the hypothesis of a primitive “Book of Testimonies,” which was supposed to have been compiled before even the earliest Pauline epistle was written, although it did not emerge into the light of day until Cyprian re-edited it in the middle of the third century. I doubt whether our evidence is sufficient to establish the existence of so formidable a literary enterprise at so early a date. From the newer standpoint we should be rather disposed to think of a more or less fixed scheme

for the selection and application of testimonies from the Scriptures, transmitted orally, as a part of the church's apparatus of instruction and apologetic. We may suppose that such a traditional scheme, like the *kerygma* and the *catechesis*, supplied a framework within which individual teachers could exercise their powers of exposition while remaining strictly upon the lines of the common tradition.

Hence I should regard the lively attention which has been given in recent years to the theme of the Old Testament in the New as contributing primarily to the recovery and understanding of the living and growing tradition of the primitive church which lies behind all its literature. The study of the Old Testament background is indeed at present being pursued with marked vigor. I have noticed that while in my earlier years as a teacher of the New Testament I found it necessary to urge my students not to neglect this background, I have latterly found myself warning them against excesses into which some writers seem to fall in reaction from earlier neglect. Much yet remains to be done toward a sober and scientific estimate of the Old Testament element in early Christian tradition, comparable with the work already done upon *kerygma* and *catechesis*.

4. Fourthly, there is what we may describe as the liturgical tradition. It is generally agreed that at least the accounts of the Last Supper which we have both in Paul and in Mark must have been preserved in a liturgical context. It can hardly be doubted that the second account of the Feeding of the Multitude in Mark (ch. 8), as compared with the first account (ch. 6), shows the influence of liturgical usage. There are, besides, the Canticles in Luke, and some well-known passages in the Acts and Epistles, which are plausibly regarded as quotations or extracts from the hymns and prayers of the church. So much has long been taken for granted by most commentators. But I think we have only recently begun to appreciate the full importance of Christian worship as a medium within which the common tradition was shaped and transmitted. A number of writers in the last thirty years have laid stress upon the connection of the Passion-narrative with the cultus. A recent study of the Gospel according to Matthew, by the present Ireland Professor of Exegesis at Oxford, offered a new explanation of the familiar but still enigmatic phenomena of this evangelist's treatment of Mark, and his combination with Mark of material from other sources. He suggested that behind the composition of Matthew lay a fairly long period in which Mark was read in church, and Christian ministers made it a text for the

instruction and edification of the congregation out of the rich stores of traditional material.

In further illustration I am tempted to refer to a piece of work upon which a brilliant young pupil of my own, Alistair Macpherson by name, was engaged when his career was cut short by his death on active service. He proposed to find a *Sitz im Leben* for the closing chapters of the Fourth Gospel, in the context of the great Easter Eucharist as it was celebrated in the Church of Ephesus. It was preceded, as we know, by the baptism of catechumens, with which he proposed to associate the commemoration of Christ's action in washing his disciples' feet (ch. 13). Then a Christian prophet (who may well have been "John, the disciple of the Lord") prepared the congregation for eucharistic worship by a series of meditations upon Christ as the Savior and Lord of his people, based upon some of his traditional sayings (the Farewell Discourses of chs. 14-16). This led up to the great prayer of intercession for the whole estate of Christ's church, which, being offered "in the name of Christ," is here pronounced as if by Christ himself, making intercession for us (ch. 17). After the prayers the service moved forward to the *anamnesis* or memorial of Christ's Passion, which here takes the form of a narrative, on the grand scale, of his sufferings, death, and resurrection, as we have it in chapters 18-20.

I have no intention of discussing this theory. I mention it as illustrating what I believe will prove a fruitful new approach to the Gospels. We should think less of the evangelist as author, sitting at his desk with a shelf of documents at hand, and diligently plying scissors and paste; we should think more of the long process, which preceded the writing, when in the context of the church's corporate life, centered in its worship, Christian pastors and teachers rehearsed the memories of what Jesus said, did, and suffered, as they still lived in the tradition (which is a kind of corporate memory), and brought them to bear upon the varied needs of the Christian soul and of Christ's church militant here on earth.

#### IV

To sum up: when I look back over these thirty years, it seems to me that we have all the time been trying, first of all, to get through the book to the life behind the book, and that in doing so we have been led to restore in large measure the wholeness of our studies, since we have had to bring together Gospels and Epistles, John and the Synoptics, the New Testament and the Old, the Apostolic Church and the post-Apostolic, which the older criticism tended to treat in watertight compartments. We

are beginning to discern the lineaments of the living tradition, nurtured on the prophetic faith of Israel, witnessed by the preaching, teaching and worship of the primitive church, and handed down as a heritage to the church of succeeding ages. As we survey our material afresh within this large context, we find that all lines converge upon one center, namely, that crucial event of history, in which, by the consentient testimony of all our witnesses, the eternal God "visited and redeemed his people." And so we turn back to the unfinished "quest of the historical Jesus"; for we cannot escape it, in spite of the flourishes against *Historicism* with which our period opened. As the great tradition reveals itself afresh in its wholeness and essential unity, the yawning gap which earlier criticism left between the Jesus of history and the emergent church disappears; and we begin to see that to make a separation between the historical and the theological understanding of the Gospels is to put asunder what God hath joined. But here a task confronts us which has still to be taken in hand.

# Toward an Adequate Christology

JOHN FREDERICK OLSON

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, that epochal experience of Christendom, declared itself to be a fellowship of churches "which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior." One hundred and fifty-five groups of churches have proclaimed their common faith with that brief statement—"our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior." It is the central affirmation of the Christian faith and a precise indication of the creative heart of our living religion.

It is assumed as natural that those outside the Beloved Community hold no such allegiance. Indeed, it is to be expected that from some quarters there may be a positive attack upon this high loyalty. Certainly we ought to be concerned with the thrusts of naturalism and scientific humanism at the center of our faith. Of greater concern, however, are the unintentional and oblique attacks upon this creative heart of our religion from persons of highest purpose within the Christian Church.

One attack comes from those who inadvertently overemphasize the communication between God and man in terms of conversation or speech. We hear much from one group about the "Word" thundering from the aloof eminence of a sovereign God upon unreceptive human ears. Enthralled by the crisis of this verbal divine-human encounter, we are apt to forget that the "Word" became flesh and dwelt among us. The best revelation of God is not a conversation, but the reality of a life. It is time to accept the corrective emphases of the "crisis theology," then to turn again to the creative center in Jesus Christ.

The second attack upon the centrality of Christ in our faith comes as quietly and unnoticed as a spreading mold. It is the wraithlike silence of the Christian pulpit in the area of Christology. The profusion of Christological interpretation available in current literature, both scholarly and popular, serves as no substitute for the absence of a positive witness from the pulpit. It may only contribute to the tactics of confusion to rout the embattled preacher. Furthermore, while this silence from the pulpit

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may permit a catholicity and flexibility otherwise unattainable, it is not an approach calculated to win a Christian victory in the struggle for the soul of humanity. The greatest danger to the Christian cause today and every day is a too meager Christology. It is time to turn and grasp that haunting sense of a Christ who will not let us go, and to wring out through some midnight wrestling a reality that can be preached.

It is toward the attainment of an adequate Christology that we shall turn our attention. Of one thing we may be certain. We shall achieve no finality. This expanding universe, with its eternal opportunities for new and rich experiences, does not permit finality. A Christology can be adequate without finality, but it must have workability. A *workable* Christology is one which presents our Lord Jesus Christ in such a manner that faith in him becomes vital and the fruits of it abundant. An *adequate* Christology must be more than workable. It must be able to maintain its centrality when challenged by other merely workable ways of life. Moreover, it must be able to provide a coherent basis for our grappling with the infinite mysteries of evil, redemption, and death. To the creation of such a Christology one must bring rational energy, spiritual imagination, moral sympathy, and religious insight. No singularity, except in purpose, will suffice.

Our course toward a full-statured Christology leads us between the Scylla and the Charybdis of too much piety and too little intellect on the one hand, and too much intellect and too little piety on the other. John Wesley was very much aware of the danger of too much piety. In one of his letters we read:

I find more profit in sermons on either good tempers, or good works, than in what are vulgarly called *Gospel Sermons*. That term has now become a mere cant word; I wish none of our Society would use it. It has no discriminate meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ, or His Blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, "What a fine Gospel sermon!" Surely the Methodists have not so learned Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Admittedly our nation could make good use of another Great Awakening charged with more lasting effects, we might hope, than that mid-eighteenth century revival. Our problem now is much as it was then. Edwin H. Cady, writing on "The Artistry of Jonathan Edwards," said that Edwards' problem of expression was "to find a means to drive out into external form his overpowering sense of an inward reality."<sup>2</sup> Edwards

<sup>1</sup> John Wesley, *Letters* (Telford edition), Vol. VI, p. 326.

<sup>2</sup> *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. XXII, No. 1, Mar., 1949, p. 71.



had to find a way "of carrying his own experience into the minds of an audience bored with many repetitions of traditional Biblical and Puritanic conventions but otherwise unliterary."<sup>3</sup> He managed to do it, and we must do the same in our own day. Regardless of "the peril of modernizing Jesus," as Henry Cadbury succinctly put it, we must do our best to present the Christ of our heart in the language and symbol of our day. Unless the Gospel meets men where they are, it will not meet them at all. An uninterpreted and dogmatic claim will get no grip upon the modern world.

# I

Our first step toward an adequate Christology must be the examination, enrichment, and expansion of our own faith in Christ. We should be able to say with Saint Paul, "I *know* whom I have believed." There are four fields of study which help us here. They may be distinguished as the textual, historical, ethical, and philosophical fields. Each one has contributed to the conviction of the centrality of Christ. It was on the foundation of faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ that the Christian Church arose and the New Testament was written. It was by the power of the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ that the breath of hope first entered history, and it has revived again and again a faltering Christendom. It was in the ethical supremacy of the human life of Jesus that the world first saw the full vision of its ideal and was moved by its positive pull into a new epoch. It was through the conception of God in terms of personal being that the personality of Jesus emerged as the revelation of God, the disclosure of the Eternal, God's Word Incarnate.

The textual field supplies us with many of our source materials. As hope for new sources was about to expire, there came in 1947 the great discovery of the Jerusalem Hebrew Scrolls. Now in the scholars' hands is a manuscript old enough to have been the one which Jesus read. Certainly we may expect some fresh insights to be placed at our disposal. Among the contributions made from the previously known sources is the complete rejection of the Christ-Myth School of Arthur Drews and Georg Brandes, which denied the very existence of Jesus as a man in history. Yet at the same time we have been made aware that what we have in the New Testament are portraits of Christ, not photographs, reports, nor wire recordings. Furthermore, the Gospel of John has been pressed back for the most part from the area of historical source material into the area of mysticism and interpretation. Certainly the historical Jesus does not

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.



stand forth in clarity apart from all myths and mists, but we have been brought far enough along by textual scholars to accept the presence in the New Testament of a variety of interpretations and impressions. As a consequence we do not insist upon a stereotype of Jesus in our own day. We are thus escaping dogma, and may discover life.

The historical field, while it overlaps the textual field, extends far beyond it. A sound historical outlook has shown us the process of fitting Jesus to each age, and the reformers of each age pleading for a return to the wellsprings of faith in New Testament times. Now the historian must clarify the vision of that swiftly receding past. For example, we need a clearer picture of the expectations toward which the first disciples were predisposed by their Judaism and Hellenism. And again, we need a more distinct impression of the impact of Galilean culture upon Jesus, his disciples, and Judaism. History, as a science recently grown out of its adolescent extravagances, has helped us to get at the real experiences which have given birth to legends and myths as a means of preserving the salient truths.

In another direction, it may be the task of the historian, whose field is fact and description, to set forth with unbiased clarity the content of other historic religions. Ever since the failure of Hegel's system of fitting history to his own pattern the necessity for an adequate study of comparative religion has been more than evident. It has been mandatory. The recognition of miracles as the common claims of all religions supplies grist for the mental mill when one reaps the harvest of these studies. A world-encompassing faith is impossible without realism.

Yet all the time that one works in these two fields, textual and historical, it ought to be remembered, as Paul Minear has pointed out, "Tradition does not suggest that a high regard for the historical Jesus is tantamount to the Christian Faith."<sup>4</sup>

The ethical field has received intense concern inasmuch as the central affirmation of faith in Jesus Christ is intended to issue in a new life. Here Ritschlian theology has made a distinctive contribution with its contention that the deity of Christ is assured by the fact that, when men touch him, he does for them what only God can do. Speaking from an intensive background of historical studies Adolf Harnack delivered his famous series of sixteen lectures entitled *What Is Christianity?* It is of interest to note that these lectures were delivered at seven o'clock on winter mornings and drew, nevertheless, six hundred faculty members and students of the

<sup>4</sup> "Form Criticism and Faith," *RELIGION IN LIFE*, Vol. XV, No. 1 (Winter, 1945-1946).

University of Berlin each day. Harnack saw that Christianity had changed itself as it changed the world. He endeavored to recapture the pure moral enthusiasm and inspiration of the historical Jesus. He wrote, "The Christian religion is something simple and sublime; it means one thing and one thing only: Eternal life in the midst of time, by the strength and under the eyes of God."<sup>5</sup> Albert Schweitzer, moving within the same tradition, brought to the surface certain suppressed elements in the liberal portrait of Jesus. He did this by a frank facing of the apocalyptic and eschatological elements in the New Testament. Schweitzer saw the ethic of Jesus as an "interim ethic" intended for a world about to come to an end. The "gloomy dean," William Ralph Inge, is said to have spoken of Schweitzer's book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, as "a production which I am old enough to think blasphemous." "The next year," writes C. C. McCown, "Inge went to St. Paul's and an eventual K.C.V.O., and Schweitzer went to Africa—and sainthood."<sup>6</sup> Such were the reactions to the descriptions of Jesus' absolute ethical demands as an "interim ethic"—demands which remain an enigma to the preacher and congregation where a Christian ethic *alone* is forced to do service in place of an adequate Christology.

The philosophical field has provided us with the most coherent view wholly amenable to the major convictions of Christianity. In the rise and development of the philosophy of personalism in America the church has been singularly blessed with the creative genius of Borden Parker Bowne and Edgar Sheffield Brightman. And yet philosophy has not completed her task. In achieving a workable Christology it is necessary to translate the religious values of the first century—a pattern of metaphysical dualism, miracles of divine intervention, and an apocalyptic judgment day—into the pattern of the mid-twentieth century. This is a task of such comprehensiveness as to require the services of a genius at synthesis. We need a new Augustine or Aquinas.

Until this great man shall come, little men must do with their strength whatsoever their hands find to do. Thankful for the fraction of the ideal equipment and insight they may possess, they must stand to the task with fidelity and hope. The intellectual weariness that bids men rest, that tells men the story has been told ten thousand times and will not be listened to again, that induces indifference and despair, is a sign of degeneration. There is an infinite reality in the universe, and when the

<sup>5</sup> *What Is Christianity?* (Saunders tr.). New York: Putnam, 1904, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> *The Search for the Real Jesus*. New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1940, p. 257.

mantle of imagination falls upon the most humble shoulders, there is an opportunity for ever advancing discoveries and ever richer communion. A pastorate rededicated to a virile intellectual life may very well find the guidance of the Holy Spirit, "even the Spirit of truth," the reality which John's Gospel reports Jesus declared it would be to his followers.

## II

These, then are the fields of study—the Bible, history, ethics, and philosophy—which provide the staple diet of the intellect for its growth toward an adequate Christology.

Now an adequate Christology must be as comprehensive as the claims that are put upon it. Christ must be so presented that he will invade every aspect of life with a redeeming power. We cannot have the selection and idealization of one element of the life and teachings of Jesus, and the subsequent subordination of other elements equally an organic part of his mind. We cannot have a view which will be determined by the rule of a church authority and sequestered within the confines of one particular organization. We cannot have a Christology which will furnish only a specious unity and harmony by a purely emotional appeal to Jesus. Comprehensiveness is an essential of adequacy. Yet when we achieve this comprehensiveness the sheer breadth of our result may make it too cumbersome to handle. There must be places where we can get a firm grip. It must be workable. It must, therefore, get down to particulars.

Let me now suggest three essential points which must be included in an adequate Christology.

1. First, *this Christology must include the reality of an experience of God*. God can reveal himself only as God. Wherever and whenever God has revealed himself it has been only as God—God in nature, God in truth, God in goodness, God in man, God in Christ, but always God. However different than man God may be, he has become known to man *through* human experience.

It is the Christian conviction that through the experience of Christ the fullest experience of God has been given. That experience of Christ has become the norm and standard of Christendom. In Bishop Francis J. McConnell's happy phrase, we believe in a "Christlike God." In an almost ineffable way God, as found in the cosmic order and in the intimate experiences of the home, has come to us under the form and spirit of Christ. When some modern physicist proposes that the nature of ultimate reality is comprehended in the formula " $E=mc^2$ ," the simplest experi-

ence of Christian love discloses its utter inadequacy. Even the mystic, experiencing God with a profound immediacy, when he comes to describe that experience is possessed, sometimes quite unintentionally, by the form and qualities of Christ. The golden strand of Christian religious experience is Christocentric. This is true of Martin Luther, who, following the advice of the wise John Von Staupitz, found his peace in looking to Christ where his sins were forgiven. Luther pointed up his confidence in the centrality of Christ when he wrote: "The history of the Church Universal has confirmed in me the conviction that those who have had and maintained the central article in its integrity, that of Jesus Christ, have remained firmly entrenched in the Christian Faith."<sup>7</sup>

Certainly John Wesley's great Aldersgate Street experience was Christocentric. The morning after his heart-warming experience he wrote in his *Journal*: "The moment I awaked 'Jesus Master' was in my heart and in my mouth; and I found that all my strength lay in keeping my eye fixed upon him, and my soul waiting upon him continually."<sup>8</sup>

How are we to understand this figure who means so much to our experience of God? Under what terms shall we preach Christ as the key to a real experience of God? For a long time we have spoken of the Person of Christ. Our understanding of persons, however, depends upon our contacts with them in events. History is not isolated personal experience. Nor, for that matter, is it a series of isolated events. It is the social continuity of the ages, including our own age. We shall get the closest to understanding Christ in the historic continuity of events. Our new term ought to be the Event of Christ. The revelation of God and the Incarnation in Christ come together in history as an act of God. Paul Tillich has said, "History and Christology belong together as question and answer."<sup>9</sup> The relation of these two ought to be reversed. History will provide the answer to Christology, but *patience* is required in what Edwin P. Booth has called "the quiet and reverent pursuit of historical truth."

This is a decisive issue fraught with complex implications. There are those who say that the "quest for the historical Jesus" ought to be given up as hopeless. Form Criticism tends in this direction by stressing

<sup>7</sup> *Earliest Christian Creeds* (Lenker Edition), Vol. XXIV, p. 223.

<sup>8</sup> *Journal* (Curnock Edition), Vol. I, pp. 477-478.

<sup>9</sup> *Religiöse Verwirklichung*. Berlin: Furche Verlag, 1930, p. 111. See also John Knox, *On the Meaning of Christ*, Cambridge: Harvard Press, 1947, for the interpretation of Christ in terms of Event. See also Reinhold Niebuhr, *Faith and History*, Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1949, p. 26, in which the life, death, and resurrection of Christ is an event disclosing the meaning of history.

the apologetic purposes which overlay the Gospel records. The followers of Søren Kierkegaard do likewise by stressing the subjectivity of theology and the existentialist methodology. However, it must be carefully noted that Christian doctrine had its inception in historical fact; that it has turned to historical fact for its authentication; and the major misconstructions of doctrine have occurred when historical fact has been perverted for ecclesiastical expediency. There can be no valid Christian doctrine apart from an authentic historical foundation. The life of Jesus *as it was* provided the revolutionizing experience of his disciples, and the Christian experience must always be related to that earthly life if it is to be founded upon a rock.

2. This leads us to a second point upon which our Christology must be adequate. *It must be sufficient for the interpretation of the total process of history, a ground for our world-view.* Among the Christian conclusions regarding history is this. The future, at least for the "saved," will be better. This conviction is neither a naïve optimism nor a desperate hope in the face of disaster. The centuries of Christian experience have deepened this confidence. Some have been despairing and hopeless, as was Jerome while from the security of a Palestinian monastery he watched the Roman Empire collapse. But more courageous souls have formed our faith. These have been the heroic and optimistic realists, aware of perplexing problems and ready in the face of apparent disaster, as Augustine was, to call for a new and nobler city, a city of God, raised if necessary on the ashes of the past. Christianity is a creed for heroes! Deep in the heart of Christendom is the hope of a better day and finer life, even though a cross looms on the way. Here we must face the question of whether the better day shall come apocalyptically or through the long, slow process of immanent spiritual power.

Another conclusion of Christianity regarding history is that God has the initiative. There may be disagreement concerning the extent of God's presence in history, and over the continuity of God's creative impulses we may argue, but Christendom is certain that God is in control. "In the beginning God . . ." That stands firm. Even the humanist of the most extreme bent may be brought to the insight that man's very capacity for desirable experiences has a source outside of man. How shall we understand the act of God in history, his revelation and incarnation in Christ? The two Gregorys (Nyssa and Nazianzus) labored over a conception of Christ as the ransom paid "his sooty majesty" for man's release from the power of sin. Anselm, motivated perhaps by a chivalric sense



of honor, saw in Christ the satisfaction of God's outraged nobility. The legal mind of Calvin, pondering the sovereign justice of God, was precisely certain that an infinite offense could be expiated by no one less perfect than Christ. In a work so often quoted, so little read, *A Study of History*, by Arnold Toynbee, we read this lifting assurance in the final pages. It indicates the meaning of God's initiative in history:<sup>10</sup>

In what spirit does the Dying God go to his death? If, with this question on our lips, we address ourselves once more to our array of tragic masks, we shall see the perfect separating itself from the imperfect sacrifice. Even in Calliope's lovely lamentation for the death of Orpheus there is a jarring note of bitterness which strikes, and shocks, the Christian ear. "Why do we mortals make laments over the deaths of our sons, seeing that the gods themselves have not power to keep Death from laying his hand upon their children?" What a moral to read into the Dying God's story! So the goddess who was Orpheus' mother would never have let Orpheus die if she could have helped it. Like a cloud that veils the sun, the Hellenic poet's admission takes the light out of Orpheus' death. But Antipater's poem is answered in another and greater masterpiece: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." When the Gospel answers the elegy, it delivers an oracle. "The one remains, the many change and pass."

The future will be better, God has the initiative, and then this third element in the Christian view of history: change is real. Of the reality of change, Christendom is as certain as was that man healed by Christ who said, "This one thing I know: whereas I was blind, now I see." This real change is not of the treadmill variety, but it is the change of things made new. Yet, if change is real, what of finality? What is eternal? P. T. Forsyth, in *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*, suggests that "to say evolution is God's supreme method with the world is to rule out Christ as his final revelation."<sup>11</sup> We can adjust to progressive revelation in many areas, and we have done so. However, can we discover a changeless Christ to meet our changing needs? Walter Marshall Horton has called Christ "Our Eternal Contemporary," but unfortunately the world is not readily persuaded that these neat words are true. Confusion over the explicit teachings of Christ regarding a moral issue plays into the hands of indifference and secularism. Again and again we witness the power of Christ on plain paths vitiated by confusion in complex issues. An adequate Christology must provide us with principles of crystal clarity that we may speak forth with positive affirmations on vital matters of historic experience.

<sup>10</sup> Toynbee, Arnold, *A Study of History*, abridged by D. C. Somervell. Oxford University Press, 1946.

<sup>11</sup> p. 110.

3. This brings us to the third main point at which our Christology must be adequate. *It must provide motivation toward the achievement of ideal ends on both individual and group levels.* A free man in a free society is loath to listen seriously to the dogmatic demands of a fellow man, even though he may speak from a pulpit saying, "You must!" More ready is he to listen to that nice inner voice of conscience which says so often, "Soul, take thine ease." A frank facing of the current motives of men places the desires for security, recognition, and power in the foreground. Until we are able to get into the conscience of man with the spirit of Christ, we will continue to be victimized by the degeneracy of moral relativism saying, "Everyone is doing it," or the ethic of expediency saying, "You have to do it to get ahead in the world."

That the ethical precept, the rule, or ideal of Jesus has within it a sufficient dynamic for the Christian way of life is a proposition which ought to be seriously questioned by the modern stoic and liberal theologian alike. The Socratic dictum that knowledge is virtue is not the Christian Gospel, nor is it the power of God unto salvation.

An adequate Christology will be able to get beyond the mere presentation of an ethic, and it will go down into the area of motives with the disclosure of the redeeming passion of God, the eternal power of good, and there it will release the forces of moral and spiritual growth. Such a workable Christology cannot be mechanical or legalistic. Salvation is not a transaction across the counter in Satan's bargain basement on a cash-and-carry basis. Salvation is moral power. It is moral power in a grand co-operative enterprise with God. It is loyalty of person to Person. The self-surrender of "Thy will be done" is not easily preached in the acquisitive and assertive atmosphere of modern society. As institutions grow numerically, begin to calculate their successes in terms of members counted, dollars given, pamphlets published, and assistants employed, the suspicion will not down that there are men with clay feet standing upon the holy ground. The statistics of the Kingdom of God are strange to our day: "Many are called, but few are chosen"; "The first shall be last"; and the shepherd left the ninety-nine in the fold to seek the one that was lost. Friedrich Nietzsche spoke for a great segment of our modern world when he said, "I will not believe in the Redeemer of these Christians until they have shown me that they are redeemed." So the matter always comes home. Evangelism does not mean a hundred new members. Evangelism means redeemed lives, and redeemed lives in the church to begin with!



We speak of the Church as the Body of Christ. We sing, "The arms of love that compass me would all mankind enfold." We pray for our church, "Make her valiant to give up her life to humanity, that, like her crucified Lord, she may mount the path to a higher glory." Do we have that kind of motivation in our current Christology? Christ can make his way if he gets a chance! The motivations must move out on the horizontal lines of human fellowship and sympathy, but they must move also on the vertical line to make of the Christian fellowship a channel of divine grace.

So the Christ we preach must reach out into every area of human life with a redemptive graciousness. The Christ we preach must declare with a luminous finality the nature of God and the meaning of human history. The Christ we preach must warm the heart and lift the spirit until a man will say, "I am able to do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." The Christ we preach is our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior, the creative center of our faith—an infant in a mother's arms; a man going about doing good; a cross against a darkening sky; then light, life eternal in the midst of time by the grace of a Christlike God. This is our faith!

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# "Thus Saith the Lord"—The Validity of Preaching

GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

"THERE IS," said a secular magazine in a widely quoted editorial, "only one way out. The way is the sound of a voice, not our own. But a voice coming from something, not ourselves, in the existence of which we cannot disbelieve. . . . It is the earthly task of the pastors to hear that voice, to cause us to hear it, and to tell us what it says. If they cannot do it, or if they fail to tell us we, laymen, are utterly lost." The sovereign place and hidden power of preaching have never been more clearly defined, nor by a more unexpected organ. The editors of *Fortune* may, or may not, have known what a dateless longing they voiced, or how old and how various have been the listening posts seeking to be attuned to that voice.

The validity of Christian preaching is focally within this vast and awesome region; by its living past which is the history of it; by its essential nature which is the function of it; by its mandate in the Christian order and by the authority thereby represented, which are the power of it.

The spoken word has never in any religion possessed an undivided empire. The ministries of religion, being so to speak an ellipse with two foci, have always included the "word" and the altar: the word with all its multitudinous accents being something said, and the sacrifice in all its forms and furnishings something done. This distinction has long been fundamental in the partition of office in the ministry of the Christian church. The priest, it is held, with much amplification mediates between man and God; the prophet between God and man. The priest administers the seven Sacraments with saving efficacy by virtue of ordinations and successions, without which the sacrament is only bread and wine, and sin is unshrived. The Christian preacher, as mediator of the "living word," is set apart by ordinations and successions according to the custom of his denomination, it is true, but also by ordinations and successions which no church can confer. There is no need to say here how deeply in theological theory and hierarchical practice these distinctions have penetrated, and to

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point to the unhappy harvest of them in the disunities of the Christian church. Mutually opposed conceptions of the initial forces in religion itself have thus been generated.

For the most part, and in many influential quarters, the altar with all its implications is held to have been the hearthstone of religion. Sod or stone, it was the meeting place of man's need and loneliness with something Other-than-himself which must be praised or placated. His altar-fire lightened his darkness and its sacrifices were shared by the living and the departed, between whom he made no distinction. All this needed to be done with proper rites by those who were wise enough to do it well and invested with the mystery of doing it. Their liturgies were shaped by symbols and ceremonies, rhythmic by necessity, made familiar by repetition and in any case older than any words which were later used to explain or defend them.

Much of this is of concern only to those who seek the almost irrecoverable sources of religious faith and practice, but contemporaneously it is the insistence that worship always has had and should have precedence over preaching, which is taking various forms amongst us and upon which there is no need here to elaborate save for one result. In some ways the influence of all this recasting of the theory and order of Protestant church services upon preaching has been unfortunate, and the more so since preaching has begun within the last long generation to lose its primacy, even in those Protestant communions for which preaching has been historically fundamental. The liturgical communions, it is held, have now the major appeal. Ours is a pragmatic time. Something must be done, even in church. Something is done, they tell us, in the elevation of the Host at the Mass. But what is done at a sermon? And so on and on.

But before anything is done in worship, there must have been a reason for it. The oldest and simplest rituals imply dim conceptions of some deity to whom the sacrifice was offered. There must have been words about that.

# I

"Religion," Frazer said, "was what passed for wisdom when the world was very young," and I should think it very likely that there must have been some conception of a divinity and his requirements before they built him a sod or stone altar. After that the priest took the business in hand and made a ceremony of it, rich in symbolism. Eventually the word and the act were meshed into one gear, and have since driven on together far from primitive religions. At any rate, if the will of

divinity is to be done, it must somehow be made articulate, and in all this there must be human spokesmen for the divine.

Within this framework every mediation of the gods or God to man has been contained. There has, therefore, been a ceaseless procession beginning in now vanished pasts, of those whose office it was to say "Thus saith the Lord." They have said it watching the flights of birds above Rome. They have said it in studying livers in Babylon. David heard it in the sound of going in the tops of mulberry trees. Oliver Cromwell saw it in the red dawn over Dunbar field. The searchers of the sky read it in the stars. Isaiah found it in a temple murky with the glory of Jehovah. Paul found it in the desert. There has never been a procession like that. The procession of those who through outer sign and inner compulsion have dared the most awesome words which can issue from human lips, "Thus saith the Lord."

Nor has the occasion for such proclamations passed. Worship itself in a very real sense and for the most part draws upon the religious and ethical deposits of the past. It inherits its reverences and its adorations, the perfect rhythm of its prayers. Its litanies may seek deliverance from archaic perils and pray for pardon from stereotyped sins (though all this is in the way of being corrected). Worship may become an escape—a kind of anodyne for the soul, unless the ground and reason of it are constantly reaffirmed, and this is always the mandate of the living word. The live coals from the altar touch the prophet's lips, and if one contends that without the altar there could have been no live coal, it is equally true that without the fire-touched lips there would presently be no altar. Duty grows dim, conscience becomes dull, ethical orders lose their power. God himself becomes an inheritance with none to speak for him, and souls and civilizations are undone unless they hear in some form or other, perplexed as they are, "Thus saith the Lord."

The Christian preacher is now in the forefront of that procession. For he too has the right to say "Thus saith the Lord," or else what he says has no living or transforming power. He will commonly not say it much, leaving it to be inferred, since to say it is the power and peril of his vocation. For he knows the misbegotten enterprises of every sort which have thus been sanctioned and what false and cruel banners have had "God wills it" emblazoned upon them. The preacher needs, therefore, to be very careful when and why and how he says it. Or indeed leaves it to be inferred. Without safeguards and controls, preaching may become increasingly subjective and exhibit almost every variety of emotionalism.

There have always been the enthusiasts, the God-possessed, oracles, tongues, and possessions offered as evidence of the indwelling and directing and voice-finding divinity. Those thus moved claimed divine authority. Those who heard them believed and obeyed. God had spoken. The disciplining of such gifts, their screening, so to speak, from excesses and uncertainties, is part of the record which still leaves gaps impossible to fill. The succession of Hebrew prophets through whom prophecy ceased to be an enthusiasm and came to be the revelation of a sovereign moral order is of the record. But only the lesser record. They had no precedents nor any authoritative literature upon which to draw. They proclaimed their "Thus saith the Lord" out of an inner compulsion and certainty whose secret they could not share. This they did do; they left their testimony to "Another" than themselves whose will might be known and whose purposes forecast. This Other than themselves had, they believed, established an order which could not be shaken. Those who forsook it were lost. Those who challenged it were broken. Those who obeyed it were secure, for underneath were the everlasting arms.

All this did not happen overnight. It was a millennial growth—not alien in its beginnings to divinations and excitements, to impress the seeker and validate the prophet's word—no matter. There was a potency in Hebrew prophecy to make it the most significant and creative force in the history of religion. The prophets emerged in the great crises of national life and invested the affairs of troubled little states with the awesomeness of the divine and validated their own utterances with the most august of sanctions, "Thus saith the Lord."

## II

Christian preaching has, on the whole, and in theory at least, made more of the free loneliness of the prophet than his divine investiture; more of his needing no station at all save a step or two to raise him above the crowd, than of his certainty of being for the time, the occasion and the need, the voice of God. That sentence needs to be much qualified, but in substance it may stand. The "prophets" of apostolic Christianity seem to have been much under the spell of their own words, having a gift for words and the right, as yet unsystematized, to say them when and where they were moved—though that rather necessary word "moved" may beg a good many questions.

It is significant that in this vague sense "prophecy" has always come into action as authoritative and patterned orders begin to break up. The

"prophet" had his say again amongst the gathered groups which were marginal to the more corporate forms of the Protestant Reformation. So Roger Williams went down to Plymouth and "prophesied." There were none there to forbid him, though the congregation which John Robinson had trained was not given to vagrant enthusiasms.

And as has been said, though it needs no saying, the persuasion that the Christian pulpit continued the function of the Hebrew prophet who had no pulpit at all, has colored our entire conception of preaching. We are increasingly cautious in calling preaching "prophetic." We do dare to say of it in its high moments, that it is inspired. And, if amongst its multitudinous voices, we discern some accent of the Holy Ghost, which, says Emerson, the heedless world has never lost, the validity of preaching is acknowledged. The questing editor of *Fortune* wants that accent authoritative enough to broadcast "Thus saith the Lord."

The Christian preacher inherits authorities which the prophet did not possess. For one thing he inherits the prophets themselves with the right to say, as far as he recasts and applies their message, "Thus saith the Lord," though claiming this validation not for himself but for them. But he must at least believe that Amos or Isaiah had the right to say it. Thereafter, their authority is his mandate and he relays their words. Protestantism with varying measures of interpretation believes that the word of God is "contained" in the Old and New Testaments and that they are, therefore, authoritative for faith and practice.

In this connection "God's word" has a specific meaning, but it does give to all biblical preaching an authority far beyond the preacher's own words. It has been and still is most effective when the congregation and the preacher share the same conviction, when he proclaims it and they receive it as God's word. For John Bunyan the Bible was an arsenal, the bar of judgment, the throne of mercy, and the guidebook for any Christian pilgrim between the City of Destruction and the New Jerusalem. He was safe if he had the Roll in his bosom. The form of this still persists widely and the substance of it considerably. But for the most part something is gone. All this I was once helped to understand by a woman from the Highlands of Scotland whom the tides of circumstance finally brought to the Lowlands of Detroit. She followed the readings, for which she asked, in her own Gaelic Bible, and the soft sighs with which she heard the fourteenth of John or the twenty-third Psalm helped me to understand St. Paul's groanings which could not be uttered and to know that the voice of God might be heard on Forest Avenue.



All this, then, the preacher may offer for his own validation. He has the massive content of religion itself, the revelation of the Old and New Testaments and their awesome authority. He has, also, though less than formerly, the creeds of the once undivided church, believed to have been divinely inspired, which comes to this: that his preaching is doctrinally supported by the historic faith of the church and in that field, also, he may say of creeds and doctrines "Thus saith the Lord." In general Christian preachers preach out of, or under, the accepted faith of their communions. Conformities and orthodoxies are assumed, or else the preacher would not be in the pulpit, but they do not need to be definitely confessed in every sermon. The great clauses of Christian faith are spacious. The great words of Christian doctrine are elastic. Perhaps they were meant to be. In creedal and doctrinal preaching, therefore, "Thus saith the Lord" is assumed and accepted.

### III

But none of these are the prophet's "Thus saith the Lord." For these are corporate, and he was alone; patterned, and he was free; authenticated by systems or orders; his authority was in his message. These are mediated, his message was unmediated, since there was nothing between him and the Lord. These are too often leaden, his words were winged. These are too often the ashes of dead fires, his words were kindled by live coals from the altar. How far now can preaching be prophetic in this immediacy of relationship between the preacher and God out of which he issues to say for himself, "Thus saith the Lord"? Otherwise the preacher may continue the prophetic office in station, recognition and substance of message, and still lack the accent of the Holy Ghost.

The books on preaching have not often asked this question, partly because the answer cannot be put into a book at all. The only thing that one can indicate are approaches and conditions, and here again the prophet becomes our instructor. He was never so much the foreteller as the forthteller. (All of which George Adam Smith taught us long ago.) The prophet never anticipates the future unconditionally. He does proclaim judgments and deliverances, but all these are the issues of the divine moral order. "This," the prophet said in substance, "being now the estate of Judah or Israel, invites the judgments of God and his disciplines, and for these judgments he will raise up agents even from far lands." Thus the prophet made a drama of history and gave it moral meanings. But the prophet's God is himself, for the prophet, the fountainhead and



authority of the moral order. It is, as has been said, a parlous business, this mobilizing God, but behind it all is the vaster mobilization of a moral order to which all pride and power must eventually render account or else it will go hard with the individual or the state. Preaching, if it do no more than make that clear, is in the prophetic succession and may say "Thus saith the Lord."

Or else the prophet was an interpreter, which comes to much the same thing. He spoke to puzzled times, times in which things were not working out well. All sorts and conditions of things, the fortunes of an empire, the little fields of a peasant farmer, or the strange discrepancies between seeming deserving and actually receiving.

The prophets worked with broad brush work. The Psalmists, who mostly succeeded them, took all this up in detail as problems of their own souls and made a Miserere or a Te Deum of it. So Job wrestled under pitiless stars with the relationships between moral integrity and suffering; and Koheleth, a preacher himself, set forth with great literary art that nothing makes any difference in the long last since time and chance happen to all. For which conclusion he claimed no authority beyond his own observations, nor do those who agree with him ever dare to say "Thus saith the Lord." The judgments and verdicts of God lie in another region.

The prophet, on the whole, did not deal with the individual, but he did maintain that the ways of the Lord were true and righteous altogether. He had a sense of the immediacy of the divine action; Assyria and grasshoppers were both God's doing. He did not inquire how, so his own interpretations were oversimplified. But preaching must try to say "how" and trace the sequence of "hows" even between God and grasshoppers, or else the sense of Divine initiative grows dim and disappears.

There are few regions in which preaching needs more to be both sensitive and cautious than in its offices of interpretation. For here more than in almost any other region congregations have begun to lose their sense of valid relationship between God and their own experiences. Preaching can at the least maintain that time and chance are not our masters, that right and wrong are the final adjudicators, that though one must sweep a vast circle to include the "far gain" or the "far losses" they are there and waiting. Here, too, preaching may say "Thus saith the Lord," and at the same time reveal to the confused and morally blind how he says it. The prophets on their lonely listening posts heard the Lord saying it in dissolving states and devastated fields and the anarchical harvests of social injustice. They were not commonly able to arrest the debacles of their own

times. They have left warnings and admonitions by which the far-visioned might escape the debacle of their later times, or else read on the façades of Kremlins, Houses of Parliament, and the domes of Capitols, "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting," "Thus saith the Lord."

Preaching becomes prophetic in this vital sense, not only through its moral insights, but in its moral indignations of which the prophets themselves were burningly capable. It must be sure of its insights before it unleashes its indignations. But great preaching has always had a quality of moral passion, a love of the right and a hatred of the wrong to give it power. That passion, of course, must be sincere not spurious, nor waste its high mandate upon the inconsequential. Nor evoke the wrong kinds of hatred, nor set class against class, or state against state. But its indignations should have the power to make all injustice and the pride which acknowledges no restraint intolerable. This the prophet believed to be God's word, and it still is.

The prophets spoke to and out of situations, and their messages varied with these situations. They made a dirge of doom, and a Hallelujah Chorus of deliverance. They tempered wrath with tenderness and were the first to see that without vicarious suffering there can be no redemption. They ended idolatry with satire. They saw a light beyond any darkness and never surrendered any future to hopelessness. Their messages played like searchlights along all the horizons of the future, seeking a promised Deliverer and when, in the fullness of time, the Deliverer came, these lights of long expectation shone upon him and were at rest. Their limitations? They promised too much too soon, and left a confusing bequest of imagery to the more prosaic Western mind, but being poets they invested their messages with splendor of expression which has enriched our mother tongue. All this subdued and transformed by Christian faith, Christian preaching has inherited, along with the right to say upon its own occasions that with which all prophecy began and ended, "Thus saith the Lord."

#### IV

Is there any way of making a formula of it? for preachers now? Specifically, no. So much was always hidden, and so much has been lost in change. The words which once explained them, "revelation" and "inspiration," have lost precision. The prophets have always occupied a perilous position: on one side eccentricities of word and deed and excesses of symbolism, and on the other the wrath of state and church. And what tried them most of all; the unconcern of those whom they sought

to save. One prophet said it all: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" To say it as simply as may be and to repeat: the prophet approaches life and its situations with moral and religious insight, and by virtue thereof seeks to fit them into the pattern of God's plans and purposes. All of which, for the sake of simplification, leaves out about everything that really matters, as though one knew nothing of the wonder of the white peaks of the Burmese Oberland save the bench levels upon a map.

But the situation, any situation, is also a revelation, something "given." Not in Barth's constricted sense, but in the vaster sense in which we approach the mystery and wonder of life and the world which contains it, the starry heavens and the moral order, the catastrophes of nations, the laughter of a little child, the struggles of the soul, and the perplexities of unanswered prayer. All these are "given," and if the prophet called it revelation he was well within his rights, for it was. And if we say that the prophet deals with the "given" by a peculiar inspiration, no matter again. "Insight" is one human response to the "given." It passes through the show of things to their true natures and as far as may be to their enduring meanings. "Insight," moral "insight," is what Isaiah brought to beleaguered Israel, what the statesmen might bring to peace and war; what Shelley brought to the skylark. Without it the "given" lacks its final meaning and the giver waits to be understood.

"Intuition," says the dictionary, is one of the definitions of insight and, for the dictionary, intuition is "an immediate apprehension." This we do know, that there are, in all these regions, processes of immediate apprehension in which many of the steps in the usually long approach to truth or reality are by-passed. In the main, even in science, nominally the most rigorous of disciplines, there are records of such immediate apprehensions without which knowledge would have been estopped on its thresholds. The scientists, themselves, call these immediate apprehensions hypotheses and are often unable to account for them as Amos for his call, though they are commonly the issue of long travails of mind and spirit. But when the time is ripe they announce themselves, and with superb self-confidence await the question. The poet has his own immediacy of apprehension. The statesmen not so often. The moralist in his great moments. But always for all these a truth and reality are there waiting, and the prophet knew that they were God-given.

The prophets themselves made a drama of it, objectified it, did all the things psychologists say certain temperaments may do with experience; no matter. That compulsion was their secret. They could find words for

so much else. They could never find words to explain that. But it was the secret of their power. Herdsmen and tree tenders, they made literatures, challenged what in their times passed for empires, traced the moral foundations of all sound human building, did it all with the living word, "Thus saith the Lord," and left to preaching its final offices.

## V

The preacher, then, is nearest the prophet when through his inheritances, his disciples, his insights and his experiences, and his own sense (I know no better word) of God, he has found a message for whosoever and whatsoever, in the place where he is, needs that message, knowing or not knowing the need of it. If the need is known, so much the easier for him. If the need is not known he must evoke it, which is too often anything but easy. We have actually current phrases which should help: "values," "satisfactions," and the like, for the restlessnesses and dissatisfactions, old as our human estate, change their forms a little but never their essential nature. A prophet also said it all: "Why do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" But the true bread and the enduring satisfactions, where and what are they? If the Christian pulpit has no answer, there is no answer anywhere. Unless some accent of another voice is heard, there is still no answer. "Well roars the storm to him who hears a deeper voice across the storm," and to hear this voice, said the quotation with which this article began, is the earthly task of the preacher.<sup>1</sup>

There are, I take it, passages in preaching, winged flights, when the preacher, taking off from his disciplines and his inheritances, speaks with an inspired certitude which he could not achieve without the whole content of Christian faith, but which is his "Thus saith the Lord," and his alone. Very likely there are psychological explanations which do no more than seem to pattern the unpatterned and supply soothing words for the inexplicable. "Out of the depths," the Psalmist said, "I have cried unto Thee"—but who shall forbid us to say that the answer is also out of the depths; or that in the mystery of the soul there are open and unsounded channels of spiritual relationship and that the words which issue therefrom are God-given? This the prophet believed and this we can believe.

There are, and will be, tests—such tests, for example, as any study

<sup>1</sup> If the voice which the preacher is exhorted to hear be validated by the Christian gospel, then much of what Fortune represents in industry and public quality lies already under indictment! There is at present little indication of the willingness of representative organs of public opinion even to let those voices speak, let alone listen to them.

of the prophetic literature will suggest. But for the preacher the final proof is their convincing quality. For the moment the preacher is carried beyond himself and is heard with a silence and a sigh—in that instant the spoken word has authenticated itself. There is in it some accent of finality. It has a power to control, quiet, and inspire, and because of its range in quality, it takes precedence over all other voices.

So much of what any preacher says will be, at the best, only a faint accent of the Holy Ghost. He has to say too much too often. His own moods may vary. The fascinations of his vocation may take the right of way. Ingenuities with text, allurements of style, the heady business of doing things with the congregation; but through it all, in ways he cannot himself trace, from sources beyond his conscious knowing, some sense of mandate and of message comes. In the long last it gives to a preacher whatever individual quality and power his preaching possesses. It does not always rise to its highest levels, but over and over again in the continuity of Christian preaching it takes charge and thereafter the preacher is its instrument, the voice from above and beyond has spoken, new forces are released—moral and spiritual epochs redated, and those who later tell their story are able to say "Thus saith the Lord."

These high moments are never beyond the attainment of any preacher and in retrospect he recognizes them himself. They can never be forced, and sore faults of preaching come from trying to force them. But there are ways of making them possible: integrities of life, disciplines of mind and purpose, ethical and spiritual insights, and above all such saturation of mind and spirit in the way and truth and life of Jesus Christ as to make him authoritative in every relationship and reach of preaching. There should be also such quiet waiting for the Lord as the mystics have always known, and the Friends, and always a waiting for the occasion.

Then needed words attend, the inner glow uses and fuses them, and the miracle of inspiration is renewed. Entire sermons may be luminous and winged with such qualities and the preacher himself, like Browning's David, be left at the end wondering where and how he had been. Or else there may be only moments in a sermon when the felt silence of the congregation testifies to its power. It is a lonely office to be thus commissioned and it abashes those to whom it is given. But no greater office is given to any than this of standing on the Godward side of life, at the listening posts, or on the watchtowers, to receive some revelation of God's word. And even in brief and broken ways to report to the always waiting, "Thus saith the Lord."



# The Marxist Heresy—A Theological Evaluation

JAROSLAV PELIKAN

CURRENT AMERICAN INTEREST in the doctrines of Karl Marx usually centers in his economic and political theories. For this reason, it frequently fails to penetrate to the depths of the arguments which Marxism advances. To be sure, Marxist Communism may be judged from the political and ethical viewpoint and may be criticized because it does violence to human rights. It may be criticized from the economic viewpoint and may be repudiated because it does not represent a realistic arrangement of production, distribution, and consumption. In their own areas, each of these criticisms is legitimate and deserves attention. But it is the contention of this essay that the fundamental issues raised by Communism are philosophical and theological, and that therefore a Christian answer to Communism cannot be cast in either a political or an economic framework, but must proceed from within the Christian faith itself.

## I

Marxism attempts to base its economic and political doctrines upon a carefully thought out interpretation of man and his destiny. The Marxist doctrine of man penetrates deeply into man's capacity for perversion and sin, and there are many affinities between the Marxist and the Christian views. Similarly, the Marxist philosophy of history represents a secular adaptation of many of the ideas that form the Christian outlook on the nature and purpose of the historical process. Because of these parallels, we have appropriated the judgment of the late great Archbishop Temple, that while Fascism is a revived form of paganism, Marxist Communism is a Christian heresy.

Precisely because Marxism is a Christian heresy, however, the attempt to formulate a distinctively Christian answer to it involves several subtle dangers. The fact that Marxism has effected a deft combination of Christian and non-Christian elements makes it easy to confuse the actual case at issue in a Christian critique. Depending upon one's own political, social,

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or economic prejudices, one may either embrace or reject Communism on supposedly Christian grounds—when as a matter of fact his motives in either case may be completely non-Christian or even anti-Christian. That is because Marxism as a Christian heresy may make its appeal either as a *Christian* heresy or as a *Christian heresy*.

In the former case, Marxism may supply the need for a dynamic faith which is pitifully absent in so much of modern culture. A secular modern is an easy target for the Marxist doctrine, because the teachings of Marxism can provide him with the semblance of Christianity and still permit him to express his social and political ambitions. The realization that a life without a purpose is a life without a meaning may bring a man to look for a philosophy of life and even to accept one, provided that it does not too seriously interfere with his private life or private judgments. In answering that quest, the Marxist heresy can create that "form of godliness" of which Paul speaks, thus temporarily satisfying the spirit without unduly mortifying the flesh.

Such a state of affairs develops very easily because, heresy or not, Marxism is a great deal more religious than most of the thinking of modern Western men. Even though the answers it offers to the basic questions of life may be wrong, it does at least attempt to provide answers. And that is more than a large portion of Western thought has been doing for the past two or three centuries. It is so long since much of Western culture has come to terms with a genuine and vigorous Christianity that Marxism may well appear to many as the best possible reinterpretation of the Christian message for the modern era. A heresy is, characteristically, an exclusive emphasis upon certain truths at the expense of others. For just that reason, Marxism can pose as a presentation of the essence of true Christianity, stripped of all those elements in the historic Christian faith that are no longer tenable or relevant. Strangely enough, Marxism has been aided and abetted in this appeal by many of the phenomena within institutionalized Christianity, which have stifled the Christian dynamic to such an extent that men are compelled to seek it elsewhere.

While it is important, therefore, that the Christian heresy called Marxism be not confused with Christianity, it is equally important that the Christian elements in the Marxist heresy be not forgotten. A heresy is, as we have mentioned, an emphasis upon certain aspects of Christianity at the expense of others. But the history of Christian thought teaches us that when the organized church has neglected or sublimated one or another part of the faith, a heresy has arisen to reinstate that part. Thus, the

Montanist heresy arose in the second and third centuries to emphasize the free activity of the Holy Spirit at a time when organizational thinking was beginning to entomb the activity of the Spirit within the confines of an ecclesiastical institution. In a similar way, the Marxist heresy was made possible, and perhaps even necessary, because Christians forgot to be Christian and the church forgot to be the church.

If the choice lay between Marxism and the watered-down respectability that sometimes passes for Christianity, there are many who would choose Marxism. Since Marxism has managed to preserve many of the emphases that sections of Christendom have neglected, much of the opposition to Marxism in Christian circles is not Christian at all. When Marxism is opposed for its doctrine that man by nature tends to exploit his fellows, that opposition is on humanistic rather than on Christian grounds. When Marxism is criticized for its dialectical view that all economic, political, and social systems pass away, and when that criticism is intended as an absolutization of the present order, then again non-Christian motivation is using the cloak of Christianity for its own purposes. And this is true even and especially when it is a Christian clergyman who is doing the criticizing. This is what makes a Christian heresy like Marxism so deceptive—that one can oppose it either because it is Christian in origin or because it is heretical in teaching, giving the impression in both cases that his opposition is motivated by a laudable and Christian concern.

The first step, then, in the articulation of a Christian critique of Marxism is a realization of its ambiguous character as a Christian heresy. That ambiguity makes it imperative for a Christian student or critic of Marxism to remember the Christian origins of much in Marxist thought, as well as the fact that Marxism has perverted what it has taken from the Christian faith. In our subsequent discussion it will become clear that Marxism is subject to very grave suspicions from the Christian point of view, that, in fact, it conflicts with some of the fundamental affirmations of the faith.

## II

Since Marxism is a religious system, it deserves to be evaluated as such. It does not profess to be a rational interpretation of human existence, subject to the criteria of logic or of common sense. Hence many of the arguments that are often used against it are irrelevant. To say that the claims of Marxism run contrary to human experience, or that they do not make sense, or that no intelligent person could believe such rubbish—to use these or similar arguments against the Marxist faith is as out of

place as using them against Mohammedanism or, for that matter, against Christianity. All these faiths, including Marxism, base their solution to the problem of human life upon a set of realities that are not immediately accessible to the senses, in short, upon revelation.

That feature of Marxism comes clearly into evidence in the Marxist Utopia. Marxism teaches that before the fall into exploitation with which history began, man lived in a perfect state of harmony with himself and with his fellow men. It also teaches that after the proletarian revolution that primitive perfection will be re-established, and that all the tensions and conflicts that characterize historical existence as we know it will be resolved. Most refutations of Marxism simply dismiss this article of the Marxist theology as mythological or as an utterly unrealistic appraisal of the way people actually live. Such a Utopia, so runs the argument, is inconceivable and therefore impossible.

Precisely the same objections can be made—indeed, have often been made—to the Christian view of Paradise, both the Paradise before the Fall and the Paradise after the Last Judgment. It, too, contradicts human experience and common sense. No one has ever seen such a Paradise, and when we seek to describe it we generally have to resort to negatives, saying in what ways it is different from life as we know it now. In both cases, the idea of a Paradise before history and a Paradise after history must be accepted on faith. Nor does the parallel between the Christian and the Marxist views stop here. The whole concept of restoration in Marxism is derived from the Christian faith, which hopes for the “restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21). Indeed, the affinities between the Christian and the Marxist views of history—and there are others in addition to those we have mentioned—are all related to the way these faiths look back at the Paradise lost and forward to the Paradise regained.

When we examine the two views more closely, however, an important and decisive difference becomes evident. In spite of all its penetration into the dynamics of history and its profound grasp of the fact that the present order must pass away, Marxism has eliminated the one factor that makes the Christian view more than a sentimental pipe-dream. That factor is the operation of the grace of God. In Marxism, it is man who wins his Utopia by wresting it from the clutches of those who now control the world. When the working class has learned the direction in which history is headed and its role in the ultimate destiny of history, it will rise to conquer the world. Ultimately, then, the redemption of history and the restoration of the true order of things is man's doing and man's glory.

Differ though they may in their regard for human nobility and in their estimate of historical development, Marxist thought and eighteenth-century capitalist thought have this one thing in common: when all is said and done, they both end in the glorification of man and of man's achievements.

Not so Christianity. It begins and it ends with the glory of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian picture of Paradise is primarily vertical rather than horizontal: it seeks to describe man's relation to God and makes man's relation to man derivative from his relation to God. As the Christian view of the primitive state is rooted in its doctrine of God, so its description of how the primitive state is restored in heaven is also oriented around the faith that God will restore his kingship over all his creation, old and new. Not man, but God is the theme of the Christian interpretation of life. Man lives only when he lives in God and for God; for "without me," says Jesus, "ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

This general maxim highlights the basic difference between the Christian and the Marxist versions of the hope for redemption and life eternal. No nation, no class, no church can ever cause the Kingdom of God to come. For the Kingdom is a gift, which is given to us of the Father's good pleasure. It cannot be earned, and it does not come by observation. Thus the entire initiative and the entire execution of the Kingdom is God's. The Kingdom of God is the reign of God. And all of this is due to his grace and good favor toward men in Christ, through whom God has set in motion a new age. Men could not be saved, Paradise could not be restored if the world had been left in the tyranny of this aeon. Marxism does not take its own view of man seriously enough when it supposes that a mere change in the class structure will change man's will to power. That cannot be changed except by the grace of God.

In opposing the Marxist Utopia, then, Christianity does not follow the usual course of ridiculing it as a castle in the air. On the contrary, Christianity alone is capable of coming to terms with the Marxist view of Utopia; for it criticizes that view from within the context of a religious faith, the same religious faith from which Marxism took much of its philosophy. The Christian answer to the Marxist Utopia is the Christian trust in divine grace as the sole means for the redemption and restoration of man and the world.

### III

One of the areas in which Marxism displays its affinities with Christianity, as well as its differences from Christianity, is the doctrine of man.

Marxism's answer to that problem is couched in terms of its doctrine of dialectical materialism, while Christianity views sin primarily as a revolt against God. There is, nevertheless, a close relation between the pessimism of the Marxist view and the Christian interpretation of man's capacity for self-preservation. But at one point the distinctiveness of the Christian estimate of man becomes evident. That point is the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

To modern thought, the doctrine of dialectical materialism is heresy and blasphemy because it ignores the beauty and nobility of the human spirit. It overlooks the achievements of philosophy, the discoveries of science, the creations of art. It glosses over the noble emotions of patriotism and mother love, it blinds itself to the fact that most men are essentially good if they only have a chance. So runs the usual critique of dialectical materialism, even in some Christian quarters. As a matter of fact, much of this critique could be directed at the Christian doctrine of man as well as at the Marxist.

For both Christianity and Marxism are deeply suspicious of the beauty and the nobility of the human spirit. They both realize that all the discoveries and achievements of the mind can be tools of the perverse will to power, and that the supposed essential goodness of man is merely a mask for his self-seeking and his pride. They are agreed in the contention that man is evil and that this condition is the universal lot of historical mankind. Being part of a historical process that is cursed by sin, man is involved in that sin. On this Christianity and Marxism agree.

Sin is universal, to be historical is to be sinful. For Marxism, the only exception to this rule is the proletariat, which, because it is the bearer of history's destiny, can do no wrong. Christianity makes one exception to the rule, too—Christ. He is the contradiction of the universal historical rule, and therefore also the demonstration that the rule would not have to be valid. In Marxism, a realistic appraisal of man has become a cynical refusal to recognize holiness even in that one place where it has appeared in history, coupled with an idolatrous supposition of holiness in a particular class. In Christianity, on the other hand, the recognition of the holiness that was in Christ leads to the repudiation of all the pretended holiness with which men have clothed themselves.

Christ is the proof that life would not have to be lived as it is lived. He has shown, once for all, that a man can pass through this world sinless and innocent. Once in all history, a man met life and conquered it. Though all other men are dominated by sin and subject to its rule, he lived in



complete love for man and for God. In the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, God has given man an exhibit of how life should have been and would have been without sin. So sinless was he and so different from the universal historical rule that men could not tolerate his presence among them, but crucified the only one who ever lived in love, they "killed the Prince of life" (Acts 3:15), because he was too much for them. Men could not stand a holiness that passed through the world like a flame, burning and judging all men by its purity.

But he did show that the evil which men have brought upon themselves was not a necessary evil. Things could have been different and a great deal better. Marxism is so preoccupied with its realization of human depravity that it will not concede sinlessness and holiness even to the Incarnate Lord. But Christianity sees in him "the second Adam," the proof of how God intended life to be and of how, through him, it can be once more. The Incarnation stands, therefore, as a bulwark against the cynicism about the possibilities of man to which the Christian doctrine of sin might otherwise lead. For the eyes of faith, it also stands as the surest refutation of the Marxist claim that historical man is evil and could never be anything but evil. One there was who was good and holy—and he was a real, historical man!

#### IV

In the Christian analysis of the Marxist doctrine of class struggle, a similar situation prevails. In contrast to many other interpretations of history and of society, both Christianity and Marxism teach that struggle, "wars and rumors of wars," cannot be eliminated so long as history remains what it is. They are agreed in their rejection of the idealist optimism which supposes that struggle is not a necessary element of human existence but only an unfortunate "throwback" to our brute ancestors. Struggle is real, and it is inevitable—this is the assertion of Christianity and of Marxism.

Both assert, moreover, that the struggle which now characterizes human existence will one day be transformed into peace and harmony. But it is here, too, that the two philosophies of life part company. Marxism teaches that by the creation and consolidation of the working class in the course of the class struggle, that struggle will produce its own solution. Christianity, meanwhile, maintains that the Holy Spirit changes men now and sends them into the struggle as the peacemakers who are called the children of God.

As in the relationship between the Marxist Utopia and the Christian Paradise, so also here, in the hope which the two ways of life offer for



the solution of history's struggle, the fundamental cleavage between them is the fact that Marxism seeks redemption from within the historical process, while Christianity seeks redemption from above the historical process. The grace of God is the Christian antithesis to the Marxist Utopia. In the same way, the Christian picture of the Holy Spirit is the Christian answer to Marxism's vain hope that the class struggle will ever of itself destroy the conditions that have made it. But at the same time it is the dynamic for the Christian life in the midst of the struggle which is man's inevitable lot.

From conditions in both the church and the world it is evident that Christians have not always been as conscious of this as they should have been, and that much of the blame for the rise of Marxist Communism can be attributed to this fact. All the more reason, then, for a more concerted application of the Christian dynamic to modern problems. For Christian faith, the doctrine of God the Holy Spirit is no mere concept. It is, rather, the very source and breath of the Christian life, and it is the means by which the class struggle is solved and resolved.

Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, the Christian lives in the human scene as a "little Christ," to use Luther's apt phrase. He thus makes clear the one hope for a solution of the class struggle. In the midst of a crooked and perverse people, he shines as a light. This is the rationale for the Christian home, for Christian citizenship, and for the Christian calling. As we shall see in the concluding section of this essay, it is also the keynote of any positive Christian strategy against Marxism.

## V

If what we have said so far about the relationship between Christianity and Communism is true, then Communism certainly presents a problem to which Christians will have to address themselves. And if what we have said about much so-called Christian opposition to Marxism is true, then there must be areas of Christian thought and activity that are being neglected in the conflict with Communism. To be complete, the Christian critique of Marxism must look at some of these areas.

One of the tasks which Christians will have to assume with more zeal if they are to check the advance of Communism is the acute and constructive criticism of society which is a part of the Christian concern for social justice. As long as Communists rather than Christians lead many of the contemporary movements for social improvement, the Christian critique of Marxism will fall on deaf ears. And when Christians are

often in the vanguard of movements and groups that perpetuate an unrighteous *status quo* for the sake of privilege and advantage, the Christian church will be fighting against Communism with blunt weapons indeed.

What is needed, then, is a deeper interest on the part of Christian people in the betterment of social and economic conditions. The fact that Marxists have managed to gain control of certain labor unions points to a failure on the part of the Christian elements in that union to be as zealous in their convictions as the Marxists are in theirs. All too often, anyone who burns for social justice is compelled to find expression for his thinking outside the church because the church has ignored its responsibility to bring everything that happens under the judgment of God.

But that responsibility involves bringing the church under the judgment of God, too. The church dare not claim the prerogative of judging all but being judged by none. As the Christian conscience, illumined by the Word and will of God, examines all the phenomena of society against the standard of that Word and will, so it must also examine the church. Only when the church has first expressed its sensitive criticism of itself, can it also criticize the society in which it stands.

Closely allied with this first Christian responsibility in the face of Marxism is a second, namely, that in evaluating the Marxist heresy Christians must seek to keep the issues clear. As was mentioned earlier, Marxism is vulnerable on both political and economic grounds, and a critique of Marxism from within the context of politics or economics is certainly legitimate—provided that it does not try to pass itself off as the Christian critique. One of the great perils in Christian social thought is the identification of Christianity with any political or economic system—be that system feudalism or democratic capitalism or democratic socialism. From the Christian point of view, each of these systems has certain advantages, but also certain temptations; and no political or economic system can be eternally valid.

For that reason, a Christian answer to Marxism dare not concern itself primarily with the question of production, or even with the question of representation in government. Not that these questions are not important, also to a Christian; but they are simply not primarily Christian questions. Rather, a Christian critique of Marxism will deal with those areas in which the Marxist understanding of human life impinges upon the Christian understanding. Where there are affinities between Marxism and Christianity, the Christian must be willing to admit them. Where there are differences, he must point them out with all the clarity he can command.

In this way, there should be no danger of anyone misunderstanding the motivation behind a Christian critique. If the issues are clear, then a Christian evaluation of Marxism will be able to stand on its own feet and will not require support from any political or economic theory. No Marxist will have any reason to reject the Christian presentation as an apology for capitalism. If he rejects it, as well he might, he should at least be given the opportunity to come to terms with it for what it is. A Christian critique of Marxism must be sure that it is specifically and distinctively Christian before it passes itself off as a Christian answer.

While it is important, therefore, that Christians face society critically and that, in so doing, they clearly enunciate the distinctly Christian evaluation of the problem at hand, neither of these tasks can constitute a Christian strategy against Marxism. The battle between Christianity and the Marxist heresy will finally be won or lost in the lives and tasks of Christian people. This means that the most important step in the development of a Christian strategy against Marxism is a recovery of the sense of Christian vocation.

With the increasing industrialization and mechanization of American society, work has lost the personal quality which it possessed in the days of arts and crafts. It has thereby deprived the worker of one of the chief compensations in labor, the sense of creation. From the very personal "work of our hands" that was its own reward has come instead the tedious monotony of routine. A worker can easily lose his sense of purpose and of value in the face of this vast, impersonal machine which was intended to be his servant, but which often seems to have become his master instead.

No one has understood this fact better than the Marxists. By their philosophy of history they have sought to bring a sense of purpose and of personal destiny into the aimless drift, and thus to dignify work by giving it the determinative place in history. Much of Marxism's appeal is undoubtedly derived from this fact, that it can lift a man above the sordid and tedious tasks of the day and give purpose to his work.

To combat this appeal effectively, Christians will have to recover a sense for the Christian doctrine of the calling which was so integral a part of the faith of the Reformers. By its doctrine of the Christian calling, Christianity provides a purpose for even the humblest tasks. If God is truly the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, then any work which contributes to the preservation and happiness of man is sacred. If Christ is truly the Savior of men, then he has saved our labor, too, from the service of sin to the service of his love. If the Holy Spirit truly sanctifies

our hearts and lives by giving them a purpose in God, then the work of our hands, too, has its purpose in God.

All honest labor, then, is service to God, and no work is secular if God is truly God. The distinction between "secular" work and church work fades in the light of this faith. Equally irrelevant is the distinction between intellectual labor and manual labor. The only value there is to labor, intellectual or manual, is how it serves the purposes of God; and, as Luther once said, the housewife who provides for her husband and children is doing more for the Kingdom of God than a lot of professors.

If this sense of Christian calling animates a man's labor, he is in no danger of being taken in by the Marxist heresy. The church would do well to give much more attention to the Christian calling, to bring men before the face of God, where they will find the meaning of their lives and of their labors. In so doing, the churches will provide the best practical Christian strategy against the Marxist heresy.

# A Review of American Religious Pacifism

VERNON H. HOLLOWAY

THE PACIFIST ISSUE does not appear to be as lively and widespread in 1950 as it was in the years immediately preceding the Second World War. This is particularly true of the college campuses and student religious conferences. The comparative lack of interest in pacifism may reflect a mood of disillusionment which prevents many contemporary students from crusading for any cause. There are other factors which may also account for the decline of popular pacifist debate: the failure of pacifism to influence in any radical way the events of the recent war; or the emergence of a new rival offering a "solution" to the problem of war—the movement for "World Government Now." But whatever our diagnosis of its relative decline may be, pacifism is not dead and it will continue to be heard from, although its voice may be that of a small minority.

Whether we are pacifists or nonpacifists the subject remains an interesting one. A review of American pacifism may be pertinent to a number of problems which weigh on the Christian conscience, since these involve perennial issues for Christian social ethics.

## PACIFISM PRIOR TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Prior to 1914, the word "pacifism" denoted a wide variety of ideas and movements devoted to the cause of peace. But beginning with the First World War the term has been used increasingly in a narrower sense, to designate the doctrines and programs of those persons and groups who refuse to sanction or to participate in military service. It is in this latter sense that "pacifism" is analyzed in this article.

Conscientious objection to war has been a problem for American government ever since the existence of pacifist sects in William Penn's colony. The doctrine of nonresistance to evil is of course much older: at least as old as Christianity, and perhaps to be noted in certain instances of sixth-century B.C. Indian and Chinese ethics. The pacifist issue within

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modern American peace movements dates from their beginning after the War of 1812. Within these early nineteenth-century movements, such as the American Peace Society, tension arose between pacifists and non-pacifists, leading to the formation of more radically pacifist groups such as the New England Non-Resistance Society (formed in 1838).

In the Civil War, the American Peace Society, after internal tension and debate, supported "the war for the Union," leaving the Quakers and other nonresistant sects to uphold the pacifist witness. The Universal Peace Union, organized in 1866, was a pacifist reaction to this compromise, pledging itself to work for removal of the causes of war, while clinging to the principles of love and nonviolence. The American Peace Society was divided on the merits of the Spanish-American War, but there was little public debate over pacifism because the period of conflict was brief and the military forces were recruited by voluntary enlistment.

On the eve of the First World War there were sixty-odd peace societies in the United States, most of which had adopted broad platforms embracing arguments for international trade, international arbitration, and idealistic hopes. Their supporters included pacifists who rejected the use of force and internationalists who advocated the development of law and of political organization for the enforcement of peace.

The social optimism of the organized peace movement was unprepared for the rude shock of 1914. The period of American neutrality encouraged advocates of peace to continue their activities. Some of them opposed military preparedness and urged efforts at mediation by President Wilson. But by 1917, the peace societies in general endorsed the "Great Crusade" as a "war to end war," and the pacifist title became a reproach.

The crusade for democracy and the Allied Cause triumphed over pacifism and neutrality in the organized peace movement, just as abolitionism and sectionalism surmounted pacifism in the Civil War era. Again it was left to members of the historic peace churches (Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren) to provide the main source of pacifist testimony in wartime.

#### PACIFISTS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The vigor of the pacifist position is tested in wartime, especially under the circumstances of military conscription and hostile public opinion. It is impossible to determine accurately the number of conscientious or political objectors in the country, even among the men who were subject to the draft. Of a total of over 2,800,000 men inducted for service under the draft law of 1917-1918, about 4,000 (0.14 per cent) persisted in



their stand as conscientious objectors. Another 36,000 men were recognized by their local draft boards as conscientious objectors, but were never inducted into service.

Pacifist numbers were relatively insignificant, probably less than one-half of one per cent of the population. It is the *identity* rather than the *number* of pacifists which is worth noting, especially when we seek to compare the First with the Second World War. In 1917-1918, about 75 per cent of the conscientious objectors among inducted men were members of pacifist religious sects. The other 25 per cent represented humanitarian, socialist, and philosophical objections to war rather than a liberal pacifist conviction within any of the larger religious bodies.

#### PACIFISTS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Again it is impossible to achieve accurate measurement of pacifist numbers, since we lack public opinion polls for the Second World War, and several difficulties were involved in the tabulation and reporting of Selective Service operations.<sup>1</sup> It is the opinion of this writer that of the total of over ten million men inducted under Selective Service from 1940 to 1945, approximately 41,500 (0.41 per cent) would represent a conservative estimate of the pacifist numbers. About 25,000 were in non-combatant service. Over 11,000 remained within Civilian Public Service. There were probably 5,000 or more conscientious objectors in prison for violations of the draft law who were not originally listed under the non-combatant or Civilian Public Service figures.

If we may generalize from the Selective Service data, pacifist numbers appear to have increased slightly over World War I when they are seen in proportion to the total population numbers. They probably continued to be less than one per cent of the national population.

It is in the *variety* and *proportions* of religious and other affiliations rather than in the total number of objectors to military service that significant comparisons can be made between the two wartime periods:

1. In the Second World War the historic<sup>\*</sup> peace churches again contributed the majority of men (about 61 per cent) who were assigned to Civilian Public Service. But the contributions from *historically nonpacifist* religious bodies (Jewish, Roman Catholic, and particularly the Protestant

<sup>1</sup> For example, no accurate account has yet been provided of the number of conscientious objectors who were granted noncombatant status by their local draft boards, or who would have demanded such status if they had not been deferred because of health, dependence or other reasons. It should also be remembered that some men were excluded by age and others (the clergy) by vocation, while women were not subject at all.

groups) were proportionately greater. Therefore pacifist convictions of one kind or another had made inroads into a number and variety of religious bodies, by 1940, that had few if any conscientious objectors in 1917-1918.

2. While pacifism developed within the historic nonpacifist religious bodies, it apparently *decreased* within the historic peace churches. In the First World War there were very few *Mennonites* in the armed forces. A survey of General Conference Mennonites in 1945 reported that of their men subject to the draft, less than one-third were in Civilian Public Service, one-fifth had accepted noncombatant service, and one-half were in regular military service.<sup>2</sup> A majority of the youth of the *Church of the Brethren* who were drafted in World War I accepted noncombatant service, while several hundred others refused this status and were detained in the army camps or furloughed to farm work because of their pacifist convictions. A 1945 survey of the Church of the Brethren indicated that of the drafted men the ratio was one man in Civilian Public Service and one in noncombatant service for every fifteen in regular military status.<sup>3</sup> While *Quaker* histories indicate that a majority of their men were probably in military service rather than in the ranks of conscientious objectors in 1917-1918, three-fourth of their men of draft age were nonpacifists in World War II.

#### DIVERSITY AND TRANSITION WITHIN THE PEACE CHURCHES

The historic peace churches (particularly the Mennonites, Brethren, and Quakers) provided the overwhelming majority of conscientious objectors in the first of the world wars, and a majority of the men in Civilian Public Service in the second conflict. But there are important differences between these churches with respect both to their heritages and the transitions which they are experiencing.

The *Mennonites* have been least susceptible to the social gospel emphasis upon meliorism and institutional reform. Their statements and principles have shown little or no interest in nonresistance as a political technique for the "removal of war." In their official policies they have endeavored to cling to nonresistance as "a way of life" which is obligatory for the Christian but impossible for the world, and which necessitates withdrawal from the "war system" and the coercive activities of the state. Although the gulf is increasing between their professions of principle and

<sup>2</sup> J. Winfield Frits, "The Draft Status of General Conference Mennonites in World War II," *The Mennonite*, LX (July 24, 1945), 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ministry to Servicemen: A Classification*. Elgin Ill.: Brethren Service Committee, March, 1945.

the practices of their membership, their leaders have endeavored to maintain the basic principles of their nonresistant heritage.

The *Church of the Brethren*, which possessed a nonresistant tradition very close to that of the Mennonites, has undergone considerable change in the direction of the Friends, whereby the nonresistant otherworldly ethic which condemns participation in war by the Christian is revised and extended to apply to society. As a Brethren historian describes it, "The Brethren moved from the Mennonite position, which is that of living as guests in a country, toward the position of the Society of Friends—that of accepting responsibilities for citizenship."<sup>4</sup> The Brethren, in short, have recently shifted over into the liberal social-gospel type of pacifism. But this shift applies more to their official principles, pronouncements, and educational material than it does to the practice of their membership, as the statistics on military service indicate.

The *Quakers*, whose nonresistant tradition was coupled with affirmations of civic responsibility and concern for social reforms, were much more prepared than the other peace churches to enter into modern pacifist movements. It was not difficult for the Friends as it was for the Brethren and especially for the Mennonites to participate in the liberal pacifism which arose after World War I. Friends played a prominent role in the leadership of the liberal pacifist crusade to renounce war and to displace coercive power in international politics with "goodwill, mutual trust, and peaceful negotiation." Of the peace church literature of the interwar period, the Quaker material shows the greatest receptivity to the assumptions and arguments of the liberal pacifism of the Protestant social gospel. As a prominent Mennonite historian observes: "Many Quakers are not inclined to view the sinful nature of human society as seriously as the Mennonites do."<sup>5</sup>

The peace churches began as "sects," as voluntary communities whose members belonged through conscious choice, seeking inward perfection based upon direct appeals to the model of the "primitive church." Today they exist as "churches" with certain sectarian principles and characteristics. Their membership requirements are less exacting, and the "ban" is seldom if ever exercised upon members who depart from traditional principles such as the "peace testimony" against military service. The sectarian traits of these religious bodies were more readily preserved in an early period of persecution or ostracism, and in a middle period on

<sup>4</sup> Rufus Bowman, *The Church of the Brethren and War: 1708-1941*. Elgin, Ill., 1944, p. 329.

<sup>5</sup> Guy F. Hershberger, *War, Peace and Non-Resistance*. Scottsdale, Pa., 1940, p. 206.

American soil when rural religious communities could preserve relative independence of the larger national culture. But physical isolation is no longer possible, even for rural communities in the United States. An enveloping American culture of economic interdependence, public schools, radios and automobiles, nationalism and military requirements, exposes the members of one-time sectarian groups to the wider demands and customs of the national society.

#### PACIFISM IN THE HISTORIC NONPACIFIST CHURCHES

Not until after the First World War did pacifism achieve growth and influence within the historically nonpacifist religious bodies. Heretofore it had consisted of the perfectionist otherworldliness of small sectarian movements. The larger Protestant bodies whose historic tradition included the doctrine of the "just war," and whose principles therefore permitted military service, included the Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Disciples, Congregationalists, Unitarians, and the Evangelical and Reformed Churches. As churches of Lutheran, Anglican, Calvinist, or eighteenth- and nineteenth-century evangelical heritage, they had persistently differed from the historic peace churches in their attitude toward war. Their social principles were those of the "church" rather than of the "sect," insofar as they sought to influence and to include the society about them rather than to develop and maintain a separatist community on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount. If the defense of the nation or the pursuit of justice required military action, the doctrine of these churches permitted or sanctioned it. The state was regarded neither as an alien and evil sphere nor as an institution which could perform its service on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount.

When pacifism was expressed within these bodies in the period following the First World War, it was not the pacifism of otherworldliness and nonresistance. It was rather a resurgence of the optimism and crusading temper with which they had sanctioned "the war to end war." Out of their disillusionment with the military crusade various clergymen, educators, and other laymen "denounced war" and paved the way for a new crusade against all war. Their extravagant hopes for the new society which was to follow the war had been dashed; they began to turn with new hope to the "renunciation" and "excommunication" of war by the church, and to disarmament and "outlawry" of war by the state. This was a religious pacifism rooted in the modern social-gospel belief in the possibility of radical social reconstruction by "Christian means."

As a type of pacifism it was very ambiguous and proved later to be a source of considerable confusion. In 1928, the Northern Baptist Convention defined war as "the supreme social sin." In 1929, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., "renounced war as an instrument of national policy." In 1934, the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches urged its members "to renounce war and all its works and ways and to refuse to support, sanction or bless it." These are typical rather than exceptional declarations of the liberal Protestant bodies in the late twenties and early thirties. They persisted into the later thirties and into 1940, except that with the outbreak of European hostilities in 1939 they urged the government "to keep the United States out of war."

The ambiguity of these declarations with respect to their pacifist nature needs to be understood by noting the climate of opinion within which they were debated and approved. They were aimed against war in general, with the expectation that it could be overcome or avoided. They expressed a popular concern for peace in which it was assumed that any war activity by the United States would be unnecessary intervention or aggression. This is why the Methodist Council of Bishops, shortly after Pearl Harbor, saw "no inconsistency for individual Christians to give whole-hearted devotion to the immediate task [of winning the war] and at the same time strive to keep the church, as a church, free from official participation in war."

The absolute pacifists who helped to draft and to promote these pre-war resolutions later reproached the churches for deserting their antiwar position. This was hardly a fair criticism. The statements did not specify that in the event of war conscientious objection was a Christian duty. The majority who supported these resolutions were denouncing international conflict with the hope and expectation that it could be overcome. Their "desertion" was essentially a departure from the optimistic hopes of the prewar period.

#### RELIGIOUS PACIFIST FELLOWSHIPS

Pacifism (in the stricter sense of conscientious objection as a duty in the event of war) took definite shape within the traditionally nonpacifist Protestant churches only in the form of positions held by individuals and unofficial organizations or fellowship groups. Ten denominational fellowships were formed between 1935 and 1946, all of them having some measure of affiliation with the prominent and influential interdenominational group, the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The membership of these groups



was numerically insignificant, but due in part to the large proportion of clergymen in their ranks, they achieved considerable influence in denominational life.

The pacifism expressed by these denominational groups, like that of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, had little in common with the non-resistant tradition of the Mennonites and Brethren. It was characterized by a twofold appeal: (1) *religious* loyalty to the person, teachings and example of Jesus; (2) the *pragmatic* value of love and pacifism as over against the "futility of war." The "Cross of Christ" was both a religious symbol and a political technique. As stated by a Methodist leader: Christian pacifists "came to realize that war is sin—the most colossal and ruinous sin that afflicts mankind. . . . In the second place, not only is war sinful, the pacifist believes it is likewise utterly futile."<sup>6</sup> A prominent Episcopalian declared: "The settlement of world issues . . . by the arbitrament of force . . . is an unconscious denial of the practical efficacy of the Cross."<sup>7</sup>

The Fellowship of Reconciliation began in 1915 as a movement of Christian protest against war and of faith in a better way than violence for the solution of social conflict. It started with sixty-eight members, and became the most prominent religious pacifist association in the country, with a membership of 13,800 in 1942. It was highly consistent with the principles of its origin when it opposed American participation in the Second World War, stood for conscientious objection in wartime, and placed a religious sanction upon methods of nonviolence. The writings of its leaders and the findings of its conferences were representative of liberal Protestant pacifism: the dual affirmation that love, or the "way of Christ," was both a moral imperative and the most practical way of solving the problem of social injustice and war. This position drew from its non-pacifist critics the charges of "moral perfectionism" and "political irresponsibility," since the Fellowship refused to discriminate between contending parties in the war and denied that relative justice was a cause for which men were justified in fighting. For the liberal religious pacifist, God's Kingdom was a religious demand and a social objective. Its realization was a moral and political task of which men were capable, if only they would rely upon love and nonviolence.

The dilemma of liberal religious pacifism is illustrated by the diffi-

<sup>6</sup> Henry H. Crane, *Pacifism—A Way of Life*. Chicago: Commission on World Peace, The Methodist Church, 1939, pp. 3-4.

<sup>7</sup> The Rev. Elmore McKee, *Why Pacifism in These Times?* New York: The Episcopal Pacifist Fellowship, c. 1940, p. 21.



culties which the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the American Friends Service Committee encountered when they made pacifism an absolute requirement of the Christian ethic and at the same time sought to be effective politically. Convinced of the evil and futility of war, they opposed American aid to the nations fighting the Axis powers, they opposed Selective Service legislation, they co-operated with the Keep America Out of War Congress, and they helped to provide a religious sanction for neutrality and isolationist policies. Invoking the "Christian way," they defended neutrality and rejected international collaboration when the latter involved nonpacifist methods. As some of their critics saw it, there was no special "Christian virtue" in neutrality, when international neighbors were being victimized.

#### PACIFISM AMONG CATHOLICS AND JEWS

Catholicism and Judaism both adhere to the principle of the just war. Liberal pacifism made very little headway among the followers of these historically nonpacifist bodies.

For *Roman Catholicism* the Sermon on the Mount is a "counsel of perfection," practicable in the monastery but not in the civil order. The state is divinely appointed for the provision of order and the promotion of the common good. It may make war in a just cause, in which case it may rightfully require military service from its citizens. Pacifism as a refusal to participate in *all* war is not a tenable position for the layman from the viewpoint of the Church. The criteria of the "just war" include the following: it must be defensive war, to vindicate rights which have been violated, with a reasonable hope of victory, conducted with right intentions, and initiated by public authority. According to these standards conscientious objection is permitted or approved only where the national cause is "clearly unjust."<sup>8</sup>

Three different types of pacifism were expressed by Catholics in the thirties and during the Second World War, although the number of persons involved was of little significance. There were a few who contended that the conditions of modern warfare rendered it incompatible with the requirements of a just war, hence no modern war could be justified in the light of Catholic tradition. There were others, some of them associated with the *Catholic Worker* group in New York, who maintained that every Christian had not only the right but also the *duty* to follow the counsel of perfection (the Sermon on the Mount), and that this was a means

<sup>8</sup> The Rev. Cyprian Emanuel and the Committee on Ethics, *The Morality of Conscientious Objection to War*. Washington, D. C.: Catholic Association for International Peace, 1941.

of opposing injustice. A third type of pacifism was only incidentally Catholic and is better described as political objection: certain of the isolationist, anti-British, anti-Russian followers of Father Coughlin and the Christian Front. All three of these pacifist types were represented in Civilian Public Service or in federal prison between 1940 and 1947.<sup>9</sup>

*Jewish* social ethics have traditionally allowed for the duties of the citizen and the role of the soldier. Rabbinical conferences issued antiwar resolutions in the thirties, as did many Protestant bodies, but as Nazi persecution arose in Europe and the interventionist controversy sharpened in America there was little disposition in Jewish circles to espouse pacifism.<sup>10</sup>

#### PACIFISM AMONG OTHER CHURCHES AND SECTS

There are other churches and sects with varying types of nonresistant or noncombatant testimony. Almost without exception they reject the "pacifist" label, which for them means "social gospel modernism," against which they strongly react.

The *Seventh-Day Adventists* present a distinct type of limited non-resistant position, and prefer to be known as "noncombatants." They desire to maintain literal conformity with the biblical injunction: "Thou shalt not kill!" They also seek to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," and are willing to help the nation win its battles, providing they are spared direct participation in bloodshed. They are not concerned with the prevention of war, or with separation from a society at war, but with personal abstinence from the direct act of killing. This formal or legalistic requirement is therefore met by performing noncombatant service or playing in the military bands. The Adventists appear to have been highly consistent in their unique form of pacifism. Their officials report that nearly all of their twelve thousand drafted men were in noncombatant service, compared with seventeen in Civilian Public Service.

The *Christadelphians* are numerically insignificant, yet highly interesting as a nonresistant type. Like the Adventists, their tradition has been maintained ever since the Civil War. Awaiting the "return of Christ," they refuse to resist evil. Anarchy is preferable to disobedience to the Sermon on the Mount. Members who accept military service are disowned by their congregations. The Christadelphians, however, do not expect to be pacifists in the final conflict of history, when Christ may employ the "saints" to "trample the wicked."

<sup>9</sup> There were 149 Catholics listed in Civilian Public Service, and there were approximately 150 in prison for religious or political objections to the draft law.

<sup>10</sup> An unofficial pacifist group, the Jewish Peace Fellowship, had less than a hundred members during the war. There were sixty Jews listed in Civilian Public Service.

The *Jehovah's Witnesses* displayed the greatest vigor of any sectarian group which took exceptions to the draft law in the recent war. Preparing for the imminent coming of "Theocracy," when God would directly establish his rule, they were religiously motivated to be "neutral" in worldly affairs. The present social order belongs to Satan. Voting, jury service, salute of the flag, and "fighting for one earthly nation against another earthly nation" would constitute disobedience to the claims of the coming Theocracy. In addition, military or alternative service would interfere with their divinely given task of preaching or "witnessing." The result was that many of the Witnesses refused exemption as conscientious objectors, but demanded exemption as ministers of religion. When these claims were denied by the Selective Service Boards the Witnesses remained adamant and wound up in prison. About four hundred were in Civilian Public Service, whereas forty-five hundred received prison terms.

A number of pentecostal, holiness, and similar groups contributed members to noncombatant or civilian service in the recent war, but they are of little importance with respect to their numbers, and they played no role in the peace movements of the modern period.

#### THE MAJOR TYPES OF RELIGIOUS PACIFISM

Comparative analysis of the doctrines and programs of religious pacifist groups leads to the following typological distinctions: nonresistant, millenarian, and modern or liberal pacifism.

*Nonresistant* pacifism is seen most clearly in the Mennonites, in the former tradition of the Brethren, and in some of the smaller holiness sects. It is rooted in religious convictions which regard war and the struggle for power as recurring manifestations of the sinfulness of man. The non-resistant pacifist refuses to participate in the sinful sphere of politics, coercion, and military service, but he respects the state as a divinely ordained institution for the preservation of whatever worldly peace may be possible. He hopes for a state which will tolerate conscientious objection, and he obediently accepts alternatives to military service in a period of conscription. He cannot share the optimism of modern peace movements nor the liberal pacifist attempt to apply the Sermon on the Mount to the realm of political action. Pacifists of this type have thus far continued to be the primary source of conscientious objection to military service.

*Millenarian* pacifism is also grounded in religious convictions which demand one form or another of separation from the sinful world, but it emphasizes the imminent and catastrophic destruction of the corrupt world by supernatural powers. Their religious and moral task is to avoid en-

tanglement in a doomed society, and to prepare for the Second Coming of Christ. They display a greater measure of hostility toward the state and a complete indifference to modern peace movements. The Jehovah's Witnesses are the outstanding example.

*Modern or liberal pacifism*<sup>11</sup> is distinguished from the above by its conviction that the fundamental character of collective life can be changed by the moral and political efforts of men. It protests against the brutality of war from the standpoint of religious ethics and also endeavors to derive from its ethic a substitute for war and for coercive power. While appealing to the "love" ethic of primitive Christianity, it ignores or dismisses the eschatological outlook of the early church, and substitutes modern views of the inherent goodness and rationality of man. It therefore endeavors to find a moral substitute for power politics, and speaks of "organized non-resistance" as a political equivalent of the Cross of Christ. The Peace Section of the American Friends Service Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and numerous Protestant clergymen have entertained these views.<sup>12</sup>

#### ON THE FUTURE OF PACIFISM

If by "pacifism" we mean refusal to bear arms or to support the nation in war, the *varieties* of pacifists need to be kept in mind. They do not constitute a common, unified movement. They may share a common fate in wartime or in peacetime conscription (such as alternative forms of service) but they do not share common convictions about the nature of man, of society, and political ethics. This was one of the factors in the disunity, low morale, and problems of discipline in the Civilian Public Service camps.

This review of pacifism has not dealt with the contemporary scene. It would be interesting to know what is happening among millenarian sects, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. Will they be able to maintain their expectation of the imminent coming of divine intervention? If not, how will this influence their attitudes toward society and military service? And how about the historic peace churches, faced with the failure of the

<sup>11</sup> The above discussion is limited to religious pacifism. If *secular* pacifism were included, the doctrines of the War Resisters League, the National Council for the Prevention of War, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom could be regarded as the secular equivalent of liberal religious pacifism. These groups sought by moral and educational efforts, or by organized war resistance, to replace the methods of power politics with the methods of reason, diplomacy, and the conference table in the effort to achieve a warless and harmonious society. A further type, *radical political* pacifism, may also be noted, such as Socialist opposition to "imperialist war."

<sup>12</sup> Consult, for example, the writings of A. J. Muste, John N. Sayre, Kirby Page, Howard H. Brinton, John Haynes Holmes, Richard B. Gregg, Clarence M. Case, Paul C. French, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Albert E. Day, John H. Lathrop, Ernest F. Tittle.

majority of their members to uphold their traditional testimony? Quaker spokesmen opposed military aid to Greece in 1947, and were joined by a representative of the Brethren Service Committee in opposition to the North Atlantic Pact in 1949. Would the congressmen who listened to their testimony have any reason to think that they represented the majority conviction of their religious bodies?

The spirit of modern pacifism is not the prevailing spirit within the historic nonpacifist churches. Neither Catholicism nor Judaism is thus far receptive to it. If the Cleveland Conference of the Federal Council of Churches in March, 1949, is a clue to Protestant opinion, the problem of power in international politics is being considered much more seriously than in former times, and with pacifist opinion confined to a small minority.<sup>13</sup>

In a period in which the political order, the risks of war, and the responsibilities of power occupy a prominent place in the minds of men, pacifism may be waning. Nonresistant pacifism, which attempts no political action, may be able to survive among certain religious groups. But modern pacifism, which endeavored to substitute morals for politics, or to equate Gandhi's political shrewdness with the Cross of Christ, may expect to meet greater difficulties. One of its handicaps is the growing awareness that pacifism is a liability rather than an asset for the foreign policy of a country, if pacifists and their influence are unevenly distributed among the contending nations.

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<sup>13</sup> See the conference statement, the theme of which is "The Responsible Use of American Power," *Message and Findings*, Third National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order, Federal Council of Churches, 1949.



# Personal Religious Experiences

ÉMILE CAILLIET

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS of personal religious experiences with God? The bluntness of this question may serve to bring to a head the whole problem of the relevance of the modern approach to our knowledge of God.

## I

Many there are in our midst whose reasoning on the matter may be briefly summed up as follows. If it can be shown that personal experiences with God actually produce valid results, then they are relevant; and if they are relevant, then surely they must have a Divine Subject. God is. Personal experiences with him henceforth will lead to a better knowledge of him.

This approach has been attempted many times in our modern age. Yet we need not pause to consider one by one even the most typical of such attempts. There comes immediately to mind a masterly work which leaves all such attempts far behind, for it sums up and integrates to a rare degree of perfection the best information they have yielded. I refer of course to William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, which provides a comprehensive treatment in the place of monographs and partial views in previous works.

It would be hard to imagine a more able and thorough study coupled with more disappointing results. Take the book again from that slightly neglected corner in your library, and judge for yourself as you peruse the conclusions. No doubt the author realized this and was the first to be disappointed, if we may judge from the Postscript he was led to add to his reluctant summing up. Precious pages they all are, rich in new insights into a vital subject. Yet the net result is here for all to see. One can almost feel the disappointment of the good, honest master workman as he put the finishing touches to his bulky manuscript. There he was, empty-handed, offering at best the suggestions of a pragmatic agnosticism to trusting souls living in the joyful expectancy of perceiving at long last some tangible Divine Reality.

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And yet that inquiry of William James has not been in vain. Far from it. It provides a vivid demonstration of the vanity of such an approach as his in our modern climate in which nothing is taken for granted any more, especially the slightest suggestion of the primordial Fact of God. As a result the assertions of the religious man will be challenged by agnosticism and explained away in the name of science—a name sometimes taken in vain. No mere theology of experience may therefore be said to provide final proof for the believer. The arguments gathered from personal religious experiences will only prove precious to Christians themselves. The same is true of the traditional arguments for the existence of God. They only make sense in the context of the faith which gave them birth. As such they constitute not only an impressive testimony but a most precious clarification of the believer's knowledge of God.

Could it be, then, that it was not so much the facts produced by William James that were at fault, or the ways and means of their presentation, as the frame of reference in relation to which they had to be assessed?

## II

It is a sad commentary on our Christian life and practice that such an exploration need have been undertaken at all, as far as we believers are concerned. The testimony of nineteen centuries of Christian life should have carried more weight as we take our place in the heavenly fellowship. We should never be found awaiting the latest reports of philosophers and scholars on the relevance of religious experience before taking for granted the priority of the fact of God.

It is sadder still that the lesson implied in the outcome of the William James inquiry has not been learned. This we say on observing the revival of Greek paganism in the so-called "high religion" advocated among the intelligentsia of our day.

The phenomenon is all the more noteworthy as the new religion is now being introduced on the average American campus, the G.I. bill helping—that is, when any religion is being introduced at all. You and I take it for granted that the students will become leaders in the church. As things go, many are drifting quite a long way from the faith. This much is sure, that J. Gresham Machen has already been vindicated when he warned us some twenty years ago that the new forms of religion he saw in the making might be noble, but they were emphatically not to be identified with Christianity.

A mood of naturism and panpsychism of Greek inspiration was evident

in Bergson's *élan vital* and reappeared in Whitehead's notion of "process and reality." See how it already pervades the paintings of Van Gogh. You will detect it too in the perverted transcendentalism of James Joyce, as well as in the mystic cosmology of D. H. Lawrence. But, mind you, it constitutes also the dynamism of "the Eternal Gospel" according to Gerald Heard in our day.

I should not insist on such abnormal aspects of religious experience, were it not that my own observations in Protestant bookstores have revealed, again and again, on the part of our denominations, a lack of awareness of the dangers involved. Gerald Heard would have us enter the den of Doctor Faustus or join the impassioned Claude Frollo as the latter blows his bellows in one of the towers of Notre Dame, except that we live in the middle of the twentieth century. Yet the language is the same, but it is the language of magic, and not of religion. The author of *The Eternal Gospel* remarks, as if thinking aloud, "To get to the nucleus of the atom, to hit and break it, there is needed an immense electric charge." It naturally follows that, in his own words, "if the soul is to be transmuted, a charge of spiritual force as high, and as dangerous if lightly handled, is required. We are not getting these results in the spiritual realm. Why?"<sup>1</sup> Thus spoke the alchemist of old who, having exhausted the *fas* of human knowledge, finally dared to penetrate into the *nefas*. Impatience is dangerous in such matters for one whose admitted ideal is to become "a thing with a head." No wonder *The Saturday Review of Literature* characterized the author's following work, a novel, as "this strange and terrible book . . . as repellently fascinating as the discovery of a cobra in one's bed."<sup>2</sup>

What lies behind such deceptions is the revival of an agnostic temper in our modern age. Ever since the days of David Hume, anyone who tried to propound a theological argument would inevitably fall into the snares of skepticism. And so the temptation became great to test what was henceforth called the "concept" of God by means of whatever empirical evidence would vouch for its validity. What more did men need, anyway? What mattered was what God could *do*. In the wake of such resignation and intellectual humility, preachers were wont to point out the analogy of our use of electricity in the face of our ignorance as to what electricity really is.

<sup>1</sup> Gerald Heard, *The Eternal Gospel*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Saturday Review of Literature*, March 15, 1947, p. 14. *Doppelgänger*, by H. F. (Gerald) Heard, New York, 1947, reviewed by Harrison Smith.

Following upon Kant, the positivists had by now made it clear that questions of origin are inaccessible to man. We do not know the last word about any single energy of nature, and yet we never allow this fact to thwart our study and use of such energies. But more, our use of them may, and actually does, help us in our study of them. The more we know about the way in which electricity works, the more we know about electricity. And so it was said to be with our knowledge of God.

Such are the irreverent and irrelevant fallacies to which one is led when nothing is taken for granted any longer, especially when the whole body of revealed truth is deliberately left out of the human scene. Then, truly, a revival of the Pagan is to be expected in mortal man. Then, truly, the forces of nature are once more to be mistaken for the Creator and Upholder of his creation. Just as Greek gods were integral parts of nature—which is as much as to say that they were not divine at all—so are the divinities of contemporary “high religion.” Behind all the myths that are supposed to suggest them, you may identify at best the formula behind all the formulae or the focus of all curves and electromagnetic fields, that is, things, or notions about things—not even pagan gods, for these at least were supposed to be alive.

I am not saying that man should not attempt to find the formula behind all the formulae, or strive to discover the focus of all curves and electromagnetic fields. Far from it. But such tremendous tasks are admittedly those of the man of science aiming at a transcription of available data likely to fit the facts. His task in the presence of nature, according to a parable of Einstein, is very much like that of a man who had been given a closed watch which he could never open. His business would then amount to figuring out the workings of that watch. Hence the scientist is a sort of Sherlock Holmes whose quest does not interfere with your own ministry any more than does that of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. More power to the honest man of science! Let us befriend him, and some day we may get his attention as we suggest to him the deeper interpretation of his uncolored data, that is, as we proceed to read parts of his transcription in the light of Scripture.

Our quarrel is not with the scientist worthy of the name. Our quarrel is with the advocates of pantheism or old forms of panpsychism now parading under a pseudoscientific garb, all of them denying the personality of God. By their fruits ye shall know them. Inevitably such teaching leads to such “unformulated experiences” as the one undergone by a college junior and reported by Professor Gordon W. Allport of the

Harvard Psychology Department. The youth remembered having once, after a good dinner I suppose, gone for a walk alone, and climbed to the top of a hill. It had been a beautiful day, he stretched out his arms, experiencing a most indescribable feeling of fullness and completeness, so that he exclaimed in a sort of rapture, "I know all, I see all, I am all." In a way it was a "mystical experience." But then, so were the ravings of the Sibyl above her pit at Cumae, whose trance was so powerfully suggested by Virgil. So were the "intuitions" of Hitler in the midst of Wagnerian paraphernalia and pagan myths. Buchenwald was the direct outcome of such "primitive" mysticism.

All similar forms of experience have this in common, viz., that they develop on a human scene from which the body of biblical revelation has been eliminated. Retreat from doctrine will produce at best romantic, "boneless" forms of Christianity. Thus Schleiermacher, although a son and grandson of ministers, is quoted as having said that a religious man is not so much one who believes in Scripture as one who knows how to do without it and who could write his own if need be. Thus to him religion became a sort of inner music accompanying man in all the manifestations of his life. In the same way Tieck and Novalis applied these terms to poetry. Religion *was* poetry. And then the stage was set for the *Jesus* of Renan and the further disintegration of Christian doctrine, beginning with the doctrine of the personality of God. The aftermath of it all was a crop of mere fancies which a candid science proceeded to expose or explain away. Even so-called "unformulated experiences" proved to be unsafe, however well intended. "Modern" psychologists, pathologists, Freudians, even the biochemists of the glands invaded the scene, which now proved to be their own, and dissipated what was left of the varieties of religious experience.

We may then understand why William James had to be disappointed and disappointing. His inquiry took place in a modern wasteland where there was not even as much as a statue to the unknown God. As a result the ink was hardly dry on his pages when they fell into the hands of oversolicitous scientists who ascribed these same varieties of religious experience to some deficiency such as iodine or phosphorus. Vitamins were not as yet on the agenda.

### III

Long years of study and meditation have forced upon me the conclusion that what is most needed in the church today is an awareness of the abnormal situation brought about by the modern apostasy. The norm



is plain enough in this, God's creation. We find it stated in the four opening words of our Bible, and this fact alone testifies to the wonderful inspiration of Scripture: "In the beginning God." These four opening words constitute the charter of all straight thinking. And here lies the apostasy: with the advent of modern times, as God receded from man's consciousness, human existence became the primary fact. Anthropology dethroned theology. Descartes devised a new method which proceeded from methodical doubt, while his own existence became the starting point of his *Meditations*.

Let me insist, for this is the crux of my whole argument. The worst has happened in that we moderns live and move and have our being in a world of self-assertion and that we do so to such a degree that we have become acclimatized. We are no longer aware that the poison is in the air we breathe, in our very flesh and blood. We are like half conscious beings in the process of asphyxiation yet refusing to be helped out of a slow death. We have forgotten that, first and foremost, salvation is a matter of self-preservation. To put it another way at the risk of mixing our images, we are beginning to speak fluently the vernacular of the Enemy, while giving evidence that we are forgetting our native Christian tongue. The Enemy says: "Why, your whole argument presupposes the existence of God; but this you must prove first, and then I will listen to you. I hear all you say about your personal experiences with God. I do not doubt for one moment that you are actually experiencing such things; but are you sure that you are right in ascribing them to one you call God?" And the pity of it all is that we give in. We allow ourselves to be drawn into hopeless arguments far from our God-given base of operations. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves," said the Great Commissioner, and he added: "But beware of men." Let us never forget that Jesus said that.

We are once more reminded that Bunyan's Pilgrim found clouds of confusion hovering over the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Let us then make the issue crystal clear, in the light of Scripture and of the best tradition of the Church. The norm is that this is God's creation. Our Sovereign God, the Creator and Upholder of the universe, sits at the roaring loom of events. It is so, because the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture says so. And we say so because we were commissioned to proclaim the truth beginning with the basic truth, "In the beginning God."

Remove this basic truth and everything is *ipso facto* found to be beyond verification. Should we then at some point actually make con-



tact with the deeper reality of the things that *are*, we should no longer have the means of proving to ourselves or to others that it is so. This is why even the classical evidence for the existence of God will lose its power of conviction once removed from its scriptural context. So too it is for personal religious experiences. They constitute the undeniable privilege of those who constantly proceed from the acknowledgment of God as the Principle and the End of all things. Like all other evidences of the existence of God they yield their divine richness only within the perspective of a primordial faith. This is the deep meaning of our Lord's statement, "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

Our modern views on personal religious experiences provide a striking illustration of this. Precisely because such experiences are the exception on a human scene bereft of God, they are exalted as miracles by a few while explained away by the majority. Anyone therefore who can convincingly relate personal experiences with God *ipso facto* secures a niche in the history of Christian mysticism. He may even be hailed as a saint. Without being irreverent, at this point I should beg to submit a translation of the French proverb: "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed are kings."

What I am saying is that the reason why religious experiences with God are currently associated with a life of frenzy lived as in a trance is that moderns have made themselves at home on a human scene where the absence of God is taken for granted.

#### IV

"In the beginning God." This *is* God's creation. The Lord reigneth. My life is in his mighty hands. His angel encampeth around them that fear him. Personal experiences with him are the daily bread of those who live the obedience of faith. Thus, seen in their true perspective, personal experiences with God make up a simple life, a normal life, an everyday life. They are the rule, not the exception.

Certainly there are great heights in this life—moments of exultation, when it pleases the Lord to favor his own with words of great sweetness surpassing all the knowledge of this world's philosophers and wise men. "Lord God, the holy lover of my soul, when thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within will rejoice," exclaims the author of the *Imitation of Christ*. Great mystics have known true beatitude when after a moment

of illumination they have found themselves at one with God. Such intoxication is to the faithful evidence of the immediateness of the Ultimate Reality. It leaves no room for doubt in the fortunate human being who has reached the very heart and center of the religious experience. Thus Evelyn Underhill has defined the mystic as one who participates "here and now in the real and eternal life, in the fullest, deepest sense which is possible to man."

Yet even a Saint Theresa warns us against supposing that what she calls "spiritual marriage" leads only to present enjoyment. For her, mystic communion can only be enjoyment "at times." In everyday life it means sharing the divine strength and applying it to all that belongs to the service of God, so that her motto finally became "Work, work."

Being thus interpreted in the context of a simple life, of a normal everyday life, personal experiences with God should not be considered, as they usually are, in their most spectacular aspects. This is doubtless the meaning of Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Neither need we dramatize in Barthian terms the resulting situation of the pilgrim as one journeying on a dizzying mountain divide, on the borderline of two worlds—one world conceived as bereft of God, the other world not to be reached save by a blinding act of faith. Such a view ignores on the one side the "addressability" of man, on the other the partial "accountableness" of the God who was in Jesus Christ reconciling the world unto himself. We are known of our God. We see divine realities "through a glass, darkly," but we see. Our lot is to journey up and down mostly through foggy weather, now encouraged by patches of white, sometimes small and dim, again growing larger and brighter, at least enough to sustain us in the knowledge that far above there is light streaming through a glory of luminous blue, even if we now happen to become submerged in a dark and threatening cloud.

At this point I would boldly come forward, with an assertion which is no longer popular in our day, yet nonetheless true. It has always been my experience that the greater the blessing, the darker and more threatening the immediately intervening cloud. The greater our victories in the spiritual realm, the more painful the trials that are sure to follow in quick succession. Having left the Palace called Beautiful after enjoying a blessed fellowship with God's people, Bunyan's Pilgrim had to go down to the Valley of Humiliation where he was met by Apollyon. You remember the encounter—but are you not aware of similar circumstances

in your own life, just as you were exulting in the glorious obedience of faith? Having finally defeated Apollyon, Christian had to go through the horrors of the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Here is truly a law of the spiritual world. A great servant of God, the late George Campbell Morgan, succeeded in expressing it better than anybody else to my knowledge:

Fullness of the Spirit, becomes the power of the Spirit, through processes of testing. Herein is revealed the value of the trials and temptations that beset the pathway of the Christian worker. In the experience of all those who know anything of what it is to follow in the footsteps of the Lord in God-appointed service, the power of the Spirit is never realized save through some wilderness of personal conflict with the foe. From such experience entered upon in the fullness of the Spirit, men go out either broken and incapable of service, or with the tread and force of conscious power; in which way, depends upon the attitude in which the enemy is met. If in the spirit of self-complacency, then the devil is invariably the victor. If in the spirit of resolute abandonment to, and abiding in the will of God, the foe is routed, and consciousness of power is the inevitable sequence.<sup>3</sup>

Such a consciousness may very well be said to be the apex of a truly evangelical experience.

Let us therefore see our life in terms of the journey of a centurion "set under authority" having under him soldiers, and saying "unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." So great a faith as that of the centurion Jesus had not found, no, not in Israel.

More convincing a personal religious experience, I for one can hardly imagine. The centurion type of Christian has only one concern, namely, to do the Lord's will in joy and simplicity of heart. His life is no longer a miserable sequence of broken vows and vain resolutions. It is no longer perpetual effort and struggle or longing for some extraordinary vision. It is a life of love and power because it is a redeemed and fully surrendered life, henceforth a life in line with the will of God. At this point it has become a constant, personal, religious experience with God; and that is what Christian life is meant to be. In the words of the old hymn:

I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,  
No sudden rending of the veil of clay,  
No angel visitant, no opening skies;  
But take the dimness of my soul away.

<sup>3</sup> G. Campbell Morgan, *The Crisis of the Christ*. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1903, 1936, p. 206f.

# The Body of Christ

RUSSELL HENRY STAFFORD

## I

TO THE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY REFORM in European Christendom, all branches of the Christian Movement, except the Roman and Eastern Catholic Churches, trace the major features of their life and work today, whether or not they accept the early nickname "Protestant." That nickname "Protestant" reminds us that the Reform had a negative as well as a positive purpose. As vigorously as it affirmed salvation by faith alone and the priesthood of all believers, it repudiated ecclesiasticism.

Ecclesiasticism is preoccupation with the Church as an end in itself. It tends to regard Christian status as coterminous with regular membership in one specific Christian society. That society alone being the true Church, its officials are the sole representatives of Christ in the world. Only they can administer valid sacraments.

To be sure, ecclesiasticism is not always carried so far. But this is the line of its logical development. And the end of the line had already been reached by the time of St. Cyprian, in the third century. As long ago as that, this legalism was conjoined with the dogma that valid sacraments are the normally indispensable channels of redemptive grace; so that, apart from the uncovenanted mercies of heaven, there can be no salvation in the next life save on condition of having received them. This quasi-magical evaluation of the Christian sacraments, which suggests that grace flows from priest to people after the manner of an electrical current, is the characteristic position of Catholicism; so that, despite its derivation, it is questionable whether the word "Catholic" can ever be used correctly as if it still meant "universal." By connotation rooted sixteen centuries deep in Christian history, "Catholic" now means "sacramentarian" and nothing else. Admittedly, "sacramentarian" is a poor word here; for it was coined in a different connection. Yet it seems to be the only word which can be conscripted to do duty for adding to the general term "sacramental" the specific notion that without the sacraments men cannot be saved.

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It is not difficult to see how ecclesiasticism leads on toward ecclesiolatry; that is, worship of the Church, the transfer of ultimate allegiance from God on high to this body on earth, as if it were not merely to function for God but were one with him, and exercised among mankind his entire prerogative. Of course no thoughtful Catholic will go as far as that. But not all Catholics, any more than all Protestants, are thoughtful. And the drive of ecclesiasticism in this direction is so strong that it requires a sturdy check. Even so, it will hardly stop short of such subserviency to officialdom within an authoritarian society as virtually reproduces the lapse into Mosaism which St. Paul made the object of his rebuke to disturbers of the peace in the Galatian Christian community. It was against such enslavement to law that the sixteenth-century Reform made its protest. Any relapse should be impossible for those who profess to be its heirs.

Yet in recent decades at an accelerating pace ecclesiasticism has been insinuating itself into Protestant thinking. It would be a worthy task for scholarship to document in detail this recrudescence of an error long since renounced in the circles with which as Christians we are affiliated. For the moment, however, I simply ask you to note the fact that the Church as such, with a deeper concern for its theoretical regularity than for its practical functions, has lately come to the forefront of anxious thought among Protestants as never before.

The Ecumenical Movement is strongly tinged with this hue. To be sure, at Amsterdam the prime concern was to bring all branches of the vine of Christ into fraternal consultation, with a view to pooling insights and planning conjointly in fields of common interest and action. Yet it needs no deep scrutiny to discern that this wise endeavor overdue was conspicuously coupled with a far more extensive dream, though not yet with a scheme, of bringing all churches into one system of world church government, which shall in the outcome be what these neo-Catholics like to call the *Una Sancta*.

The fact itself can hardly be challenged. Once alerted to it, any reader of the current output of Protestant presses finds this church complex amply attested. It would appear that we cannot hope for the Kingdom, whatever we may take that to be, unless we first make sure of having the right church as its herald and agent; while to be the right church it must be visibly in polity and creed, and to a degree also in liturgy, one church everywhere. The reflection is at least invited that no church is as yet the right church; each church is at best a fragment, with but fragmentary access to the resources for salvation.



In the absence as yet of documentation, it is alluring to speculate as to the sources of this strain in contemporary Protestantism. I venture the guess that they are mainly two.

First, there is the pressure of the High Church or Catholic party within the Anglican Communion. To this perhaps disproportionate attention has been accorded on account of the privileged status of the established Church in England, together with the snob appeal of the claim of its right wing to unique correctness if not validity of a Catholic ministry, on the ground of an alleged historical succession which historians are unable to validate in any instance, and which by the major claimants is disallowed in the Anglican instance.

Second, there is the anxiety of the neo-orthodox, who are unquestionably at this moment the party of life in large areas of European Protestantism, for a "gathered church" which shall be a genuine Christian fellowship, rather than just a conventional institution into which people are born as they are born to their citizenship, with no initial choice.

Behind the Anglo-Catholics, through a century's mists of the Oxford Movement, looms the austere, engaging figure of the young John Henry Newman. And behind neo-orthodoxy one discerns the equally austere and engaging figure of Søren Kierkegaard. Newman and Kierkegaard were two of the greatest Christians of the nineteenth century, and also two of the oddest. They are two of God's saints. But with shining souls they were also in this life stubbornly wrongheaded, as so many saints have been. They were wrongheaded, moreover, in opposite directions. Yet now in their earthly after-life they strangely converge to urge upon twentieth-century Christians a degree of concern for the church as such which is counter to our revolutionary freedom. Unless we are on our guard, we shall be entangled again in a yoke of bondage.

## II

There has been little discussion of this danger to date. For most of us have stumbled along after persuasive leaders without much reflection. Perhaps even our leaders have moved without careful calculation, except certain fraternally minded Anglo-Catholics, whom one presumes to be quite aware of their ends, though certainly not to the point of discourtesy ingenuous enough to flaunt them. Nevertheless the trend can be proved by the recurrence in recent talk about the church of certain themes which, taken together, yield that very ecclesiasticism traditionally abhorred by Protestants.



First we must note the insistence upon unity, based upon our Lord's prayer before his passion "that they all may be one," yet without any searching as to the nature of the unity enjoined. On the surface it then appears that diversities of organization and opinion stand in the way of that petition's fulfillment. But to suppose that in so awful an hour our Lord was exercised for unity of administration is to imply that he was an executive, and pathetically pedestrian at that, rather than a poet and prophet. And that is as false to his figure in the Gospels as it is to our acquaintance with the living Christ. Moreover, it posits some sort of initial uniformity of local type and general government among the first churches, which is certainly not reflected in the New Testament; while it overlooks the painful fact that the sharpest discords often occur within a system outwardly uniform. Further, to impugn the legitimacy of varieties of thought and expression corresponding with differences of temperament and capacity in description of the same body of truth is to fly in the face of all our knowledge of mental processes. To suppose that in his prayer our Lord had more or other in mind than unity of spirit, that is, of central loyalty and purpose, is to import into his mind from ours a preoccupation with secondary matters for which there is no evidence.

Second, there has been a mounting stress of late upon the importance of the sacramental life of the church. Here I must plead guilty, with many others who equally deplore the sacramentarian distortion, to having echoed this phrase without thinking it through. For the sacraments of baptism and communion are precious to me, as time-honored symbols or enacted poems of the basic truths of new life in Christ and sustained fellowship with him. Yet that both this renewal and this fellowship occur apart from these tangible reminders of their reality, we are obliged to concede by the witness of many Christian lives. It is indeed timely to protest that supreme importance attaches to the devotional life of the church. And this devotional life will in most instances clothe itself in reverent observance of the historic sacraments. Yet we must insist that it is the devotional life itself, not any dramatic formulation of it, which is alone essential.

Third, we encounter in many quarters a revived emphasis upon St. Paul's repeated metaphor of the church as the body of Christ. Surely no more apt figure has ever been imagined for the supremacy of Christ, and for the wide range of mutually supplementary parts assigned by nature and inclination to the various members of a community gathered in his name. That any group of men and women, united under Christ's leader-

ship for the worship of God and the service of men, must needs function as one organism, in obedience to one head, is as clear as anything can be.

Yet the church remains only the body of Christ. It has never been the body of Christ, born of Mary, that Christians worship. It is to the soul and divinity indwelling his flesh and blood that obeisance is due. The church as the body of Christ is not a proper object of veneration.

Further, St. Paul's metaphor prompts a telling inquiry. Can a body of men be constituted as the body of Christ simply by virtue of a statute? Or, on the other hand, is any society, regardless of its constitution, transformed into the body of Christ as soon as it is his spirit which flows through it? We must bear in mind that spirit means breath. Should we not say that, when the spirit of Christ breathes upon us recognizably from any source, in that source we shall recognize a true body of Christ, whether it conform with conventional standards or not?

By this test, such bodies as, for instance, the Society of Friends, the Church of Christ Scientist, and the Salvation Army may be validated as bodies of Christ, though in profession and procedure they follow patterns without precedent. Nor is the plural number, bodies of Christ, inconsistent with St. Paul's implications. Assuredly any test which would exclude such bodies as have just been mentioned, ministering as they often do a Christian experience palpably vital, is too narrow for the truth of the Spirit, which "bloweth where it listeth."

### III

It is not in principle against heightened awareness of the church among Protestants that there is call for protest, however. Indeed, as against the individualism and divisiveness into which our accent upon Christian liberty is apt to betray us, it is high time that we take note that Christian faith is by its very nature a social experience. Not only are we brought to the faith by Christian witness, and brought up in the faith by Christian nurture; but the only way a man can live as a Christian is in association with others of like spirit. Though he were locked in a solitary cell, the heart of the Christian would still be with his comrades on earth as well as with his Lord and theirs. Religion as the flight of the alone to the Alone can have no Christian status. Our Lord himself has linked healthy human relations with healthy Godward relations so indissolubly that neither is thinkable for us without the other. We cannot love God unless we love our fellow men. We cannot love our fellow men unless we love God, so that we see them through his eyes.

The nearest of our fellow men are they with whom we share the supreme allegiance. The fellowship in which that allegiance effectually unites them and us in heart and aim, is this not in effect the church? Beginning close by, it will spread out, as our outlook broadens, to include all our fellow-believers everywhere. But always for every Christian the center will be close by, in the immediate circle of his direct contacts. And this experience is not only essential to our faith; it is identical with it. For faith in the New Testament sense is not endorsement of a creed; it is personal devotion to the Head of us all, and in him to his other members, and for his sake to the race which he died on the cross and lives in the church to save. In this basic sense the church as such ought certainly to be held always in the forefront of our thinking.

This word "church," however, has become in itself a handicap upon honest thinking. For through the Catholic centuries it has added to its proper denotations complicated overtones of politics, power and pomp, which give it a traitorous connotation. It has become a satchel word, which must be unpacked, so that we shall rescue its meaning from the rubbish around it before we can use it, since use it still we evidently must, with accuracy.

The word itself in the New Testament, *ecclesia*, has a suggestive background. For it had been used in the Septuagint to render the Hebrew term for the Congregation of Israel, the whole body of the twelve tribes. Those tribes constituted at all times one nation. But be it remarked that this nation was never governed as one state save in the brief period from Saul through Solomon, when political unity was evidently a precarious artifice.

So the word *ecclesia* is sometimes used in the New Testament to denote the whole Christian collectivity, which is also called there the New Israel, and regarded as one nation, though it included both Jews and all sorts of Gentiles in many lands, who were grouped locally in Christian societies with many different patterns of practice and accent, like the different dialects and folkways of the dozen tribes in Old Israel. And it may well be said that all Christians together do constitute a new race, by birth anew to one devotion and one commitment.

The connection is obvious, moreover, between the noun *ecclesia* and the participle *eklektoi*, the elect or called. Each Christian is personally called by the Lord to his standard. Those who respond to his call are the *eklektoi*. Collectively, then, they constitute the *ecclesia*, the brotherhood of the elect, this new nation, the church.

It must be emphasized that national unity does not necessarily involve unity of government. The parallel of twelve tribes in Old Israel pertinently pointed this out to the early Christians. Our wider view of history confirms this observation. The identification of nation with state is the political heresy of our time. It lies at the root of the statism, mis-called nationalism, which has produced this era of total wars. If even in little Palestine there was room for twelve tribes, why should there not be many times twelve varieties of usage and point of view and administration in the New Israel? Provided there be no animosities, provided that what the nation has in common shall override the minor differences among the constituent followings or sects, surely these differences are what the Lutherans have always called some at least of them, "adiaphora," that is, matters of no moment. And the proper and practicable aim of Councils of Churches today at every level is to eliminate by mutual consultation and working agreements, in the Holy Spirit of love, the hostile tensions which have been fostered by foul spirits of conceit and pride among subordinate units of the world-wide Christian fellowship.

To the further meanings packed into our satchel word "church" that term "fellowship" is the key. First, ever since Jesus with his disciples started to live out the Christian way, there has been a new kind of fellowship among men of his obedience. This is the comradeship of good will and mutual aid which is sustained among them by the comradeship they share with the ever-living Christ. It is this new principle and type of fellowship, never before existing anywhere, which is the church in essence. This is the special creation of God in Christ. It is the kind of fellowship without which no man can realize himself as a son of God. This is the church, in the only sense that Jesus founded a church. And of the church in this sense it is true that "outside the church there is no salvation." For salvation here and hereafter means deliverance from the solitude of self-seeking into the happy society of God and his children.

#### IV

Suppose we say, then, that what makes a man a real church member is the experience of release from self in this new kind of fellowship, at once divine and human, which was instituted by Christ. Then for that man the human society in which this experience occurs is his church; the body of Christ, that is, the local embodiment of Christ's Spirit, into which he finds himself, as it were, organically incorporated. There are two ways in which such a definition of the church departs from familiar ideas.

First, that particular human group may not be what we call a church at all. It may even be a society not connected with any one church, like a lodge, or a Y.M.C.A., or a Buchmanite group, or a chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Second, the societies commonly called churches may convey little or nothing of the experience which we have been describing. To "join the church," as we say, may be no more than a polite conforming with convention, a gesture declarative of good intentions, or a measure taken to improve one's standing in the world. What then are these societies commonly called churches, if the essential experience of church membership or salvation can occur in other social contexts, while in these it may be lacking?

In answering that question we must begin by observing that it is certainly no part of the intention of the societies commonly called churches that the vital Christian experience shall be lacking in them. This experience is what they all stand for. They have all arisen out of societies in which it regularly occurred. Moreover, it is they which perform the basic function of keeping the biblical record open, and calling attention to it. Without publicity for that record, enshrining as it does the dynamic personality of Christ and the normative opening episodes of the new kind of fellowship he brought, such fellowship would not be anywhere available. And when any society in name a church awakens to the awareness that in fact it does not give evidence of that spirit, prayerful effort for recapturing it is bound to follow.

Hence we may adduce that in a secondary sense the word "church" is used not without propriety to designate associations for the purpose of propagating Christian fellowship among those who as yet have not achieved it, and of cultivating it among those who have. Yet it is not these associations or any one of them that Christ founded. They are voluntary human associations, devised by men in accordance with their circumstances and best judgment, to serve Christ as channels for his kindness.

"Kindness," by the way, seems to me to be in many places a better translation than "grace" for the regular New Testament word denoting God's favor to men through Christ. And the kindness of Christ is contagious. For this we may be sure that Christ is concerned. For the ways and means which men find practicable in different situations to spread and intensify that contagiousness, on the other hand, there is no reason to suppose that he has any anxiety, provided only that his spirit be allowed to flow through them.



Certainly these human associations have from the outset been of many different sorts. There was clearly no uniformity save of spirit among the primitive churches. There has never in history been one all-inclusive Christian administration. Though a considerable degree of inclusiveness was achieved in the European Middle Ages, even then the Eastern Church and many lesser bodies followed separate paths; while this limited European consensus rested upon enforcement by police measures, at the expense of the spirit of Christ. To speak of the reunion of the churches at the organizational level is absurd, since there has never yet been a union.

Further, to claim exclusively, for any one type of Christian organization, that it was founded by Christ, and is a divine creation, is sheer historical falsehood and impertinence; though of course to speak of any church or any other beneficent voluntary human association, a political party, a social club, a marriage, as a work of God, is in another sense legitimate. For to all good ends the devices of man and the will of God are recognized by Christians as the reverse and the obverse of the same action. It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, which includes all service of value through whatever agents and in whatever sphere. It is dangerous, however, to use such an expression as that the Church is God's creation, lest even we ourselves take it to mean that some particular voluntary human association is not also just as truly a work of man as anything else man does on earth.

But if what counts in human association for promoting the Christian spirit be simply that fellowship of the kind Christ inaugurated shall be spread and confirmed among men, then surely no one kind of church in this secondary sense can claim any advantage over any other, save for those Christians to whom its way of government is particularly congenial, its way of worship is temperamentally agreeable, its way of describing the content of faith is concordant with their mode and degree of intellectual discernment, and its observances are convenient. These are matters of taste, like the houses we choose to live in. That there should be different kinds of churches for people of diverse dispositions is to be expected and desired as long as human nature itself shall be distinguished by exhilarating diversities. It is as natural and unobjectionable as that there should be different kinds of dwellings in the same neighborhood, the people in each using such furniture and following such routines as suit them best, without offense given or taken because of incidental differences from their neighbors.

There is one proviso in both instances, however; namely, that the



people in these different houses shall be good neighbors, and shall consciously constitute one community to advance the ends which all have in common. When all the human associations for the Christian life, commonly called churches, shall have been brought into such general association for sharing insights, and working together to advance Christian projects, that is, I suggest, as near to unity of organization as we can safely come, without risk of a dictatorial bureaucracy repressive toward originality, and therefore destructive of the free Christian spirit. For at that point we shall already be at one in allegiance to the highest and in the comradeship of humble and generous good will. That is the only kind of unity among his followers for which we can readily believe that our Lord cares.

## V

There are no middle terms in the New Testament between the church as the collectivity of all believers, the New Israel, and a society of believers living in fellowship in one place. But no doubt the middle terms are lacking simply because there was as yet no occasion for them. As the movement spread and local churches multiplied, it became natural for them to combine in municipal, provincial and national associations, also called churches. As in due course diversities crystallized in order and liturgy and the conceptualizing of the faith, corresponding with contrasts in derivation, environment, and culture among believers, associations of churches along these lines also arose, across political frontiers.

These too are called churches; and it is mainly they which confront us today, as parallel denominations, on the secondary level of church organization. There was a time when each of these denominations claimed to be the only true Church. It is not a shrinking of faith but a broadening of mind, together with a deepening of heart, which prompts their leaders of thought today to advance instead the more temperate explanation that each of these denominations emphasizes one element in the total symphony of witness to the faith, without which the symphony would not be complete, while that note might not be sounded if there were not a special instrument to bring it out. Upon that modest and irenic basis it is again becoming possible to bring churches of all kinds within areas of all dimensions into Councils of Churches for each area; councils which are not mandatory but advisory in their decisions, in harmony with Christ himself, who characteristically preferred persuasion to command.

This advance toward closer affiliation of all the church organizations doubtless heralds a new era of effectual outreach by the spirit of Christ

among all tribes of men. Yet it is still a devastating error to identify any such grouping of organizations with the church which Christ founded, and to describe it positively and exclusively as the body of Christ. Even under forms of democracy, organizations of every sort are inevitably run to most practical intents by their officials; and officialdom draws to itself, in religion as well as in politics, men of a type of mind devoted to organization for its own sake, and prone to pursue administrative technics and ends as if these were sufficient in themselves. But no organization is good for anything save as it effectively serves an end which transcends it. The sole end of any Christian organization is the fellowship of men with God in Christ and with one another in his spirit. Any body anywhere which procures this experience for those whom it draws within its influence is a body of Christ. No body which fails to do so is his body, no matter how valid its charter may seem.

It is high time for us Protestants to be more mindful than we have sometimes been that Christian faith is essentially social, so that outside the experience of Christian fellowship, which constitutes of itself the true church founded by Christ, there can be no salvation. At the same time, in strenuous championship of this religious realism, we must withstand every drive from any quarter toward the reinstatement of concern for correctness in the details and uniformity in the administration of Christian living in community. For the universal Church is not a state; it is a nation, in which it is right that there should be many tribes. The Church in essence is not something we can set up and join; it is an experience of brotherhood which comes to us as we are drawn by Christ out of loneliness and fear into heartening comradeship with him, and with our brothers in his redeeming love.

## Progress in Christian Unity from Edinburgh to Amsterdam

WALTER M. HORTON

IT IS SOMETIMES ARGUED that the Amsterdam Assembly definitely receded from the high level of Christian Unity reached at the Edinburgh Faith and Order Conference of 1937. If this were in fact the case, it would be neither surprising nor deplorable. The war limited the work of the Faith and Order Movement, very badly indeed, in the intervening years; and so many of the delegates at Amsterdam were inexperienced in the art of ecumenical conversation that they might well be excused for beginning farther back than where Edinburgh left off. Yet a careful comparison of the findings of Edinburgh with those of Section I (the Faith and Order section) at Amsterdam has convinced me that the search for a solid basis of Christian Unity actually *advanced* between Edinburgh and Amsterdam.

In order to see that this is so, it is necessary to distinguish between two ways of defining the issues of Christian Unity: what may be called the "point" approach and what may be called the "systematic" or "total" approach. To bring out the distinction between them, consider what happened at the Marburg Colloquy between Luther and Zwingli. A series of theological points were discussed at Marburg, and on *all but the last point*—the Lord's Supper—sufficient agreement was reached between the Lutheran and Reformed representatives to permit real unity between the two wings of Protestantism. What a tragedy that they should have parted because of disagreement at only one point! Yes, it was a tragedy, and if more time had been granted, might have been avoided. If Luther had lived just a little longer, he and Calvin might have agreed on the one point where he and Zwingli had disagreed—at least sufficiently for comity. But the fact that so much time was needed, more than the lifetime of Luther or Zwingli, surely indicates that the point at issue was not "just one little point," but a point symptomatic of a deep, pervasive difference between two types of Christianity. Luther more than hinted at this in his famous parting shot at the Zwinglians: *Ihr habt einen anderen*

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*Geist!* One implication of this must of course be set aside in our modern ecumenical conversations: the implication that the "spirit" of our church is the Holy Spirit, and any "spirit" differing from it must be a demonic spirit! The act of ecumenical conversation implies at the start a faith that is presently confirmed in every exchange of testimonies, that there may be diversities of "spirits," but the same Spirit. Yet it also implies and confirms that Luther was profoundly right in his observation that churches with different traditions usually differ in their whole "spirit," systematically and totally, not just at the clearly definable "point" where the difference comes out openly. There was something *running all through* the Lutheran type of Christianity which differed totally and systematically from the Reformed type, manifesting itself clearly at the point where they had to part, but manifesting itself in differing shades of emphasis even in those points of doctrine and practice where they felt close enough to unite. McGiffert in his *Protestant Thought Before Kant* traces the difference finally back to a difference in concepts of God—of which neither Luther nor Zwingli was aware at Marburg, except as a subtle, indefinable difference of "spirit."

Applying this distinction to the Edinburgh and Amsterdam conferences, we may say that the appearance of nearly complete unity at Edinburgh, and of deep-going disunity at Amsterdam, sprang from the fact that Edinburgh worked very largely (not wholly, as we shall see) on the *point* system, while Amsterdam wrestled heroically to define a *total, systematic* difference between Christian churches, underlying all special points of controversy.

I do not wish for one moment to minimize the importance of the agreements reached at Edinburgh. They represented, as I see it, an attempt to carry out into great detail the agreements previously reached at Lausanne and Jerusalem concerning the Gospel message to which all Christians bear witness. It was comparatively easy—or seemed so after it was done—to formulate a brief statement of the Christian message, acceptable to all. "Our message is Jesus Christ." It was much harder to work out a detailed theological doctrine, referring specifically to controversial issues on which churches have actually split, and going point by point over the principal areas of Christian Faith, Worship, Sacraments, Polity, and Orders. That in all these areas only one point of irreducible disagreement was found—concerning ministerial orders—was something of a modern miracle.

Unity of Faith was the primary achievement at Edinburgh. I doubt if proper use has yet been made of Chapters II and III, "The Grace of

Our Lord Jesus Christ" and "The Church of Christ and the Word of God," as ecumenical controls upon sectarian extremes in Christian theology. How boldly those two chapters tackle two of the knottiest problems of the Christian faith, Grace versus Free Will, and Church versus Bible; and how triumphantly they resolve them! The truths contended for by Calvinist predestinarians and Arminian libertarians, by Catholic defenders of Church tradition and Protestant biblicists, are made to lie down peaceably together, like the lion and the lamb. I have resolved to have my theological students read these chapters carefully before drafting their credos and preparing their ordination statements. The miraculous unity expressed in these chapters, echoed in the concluding Affirmation of Union, is *the* great wonder made manifest at Edinburgh.

Only a few shades less surprising was the unity reached in the areas of Worship, Sacraments, and Polity. Differences between liturgical and nonliturgical worship were found to be no bar to unity. "In the non-Sacramental worship of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we were agreed that there is little remaining occasion for maintaining the existing divisions between our Churches."<sup>1</sup> Sacraments presented more difficult problems; yet *except where complicated by the question of the celebrant's ministerial orders*, differences concerning the nature and number of the sacraments, and differences of emphasis placed on the Word and the sacraments, were considered to offer no insuperable obstacle to union. Differences concerning Polity were resolved by the Lausanne formula: "recommended that the episcopal, presbyteral and congregational systems all be included in the polity of the future reunited Church"—a formula later applied with great success in drafting the polity of the United Church of South India. Only when they came to the last point, concerning ministerial Orders, did the delegates find that they were unable to agree. Was this not a great and lamentable tragedy? Must one not sympathize with Dr. Van Dusen's sharp judgment concerning this rude anticlimax to the otherwise miraculous achievements of Edinburgh?<sup>2</sup>

Let us imagine a dispassionate non-Christian observing churchmen in their solemn efforts to heal the divisions in Christ's Church, and thus effect what all affirm to be God's Will for that Church. He could hardly fail to note that, if the entire content of Christian doctrine were spread along a line, no differences sufficiently serious to prevent union are to be discovered over the greater part of that line—in what Christians believe concerning God, the world, man, Christ, salvation, immortality. The only segment of the line containing serious obstacles to Christian

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Second World Conference on Faith and Order, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Christendom*, Summer, 1946, p. 340. (Conclusion of article on "The Issues of Christian Unity.")



unity lies at the extreme last end—in the Church's view of itself. It could hardly escape his attention, further, that within this one area of major difficulty, differences which are held to be crucial occur at only one point—in the interpretation of the origin, ordination, and authority of the Christian Ministry. When he reflected further, that the overwhelming majority of the Churches' spokesmen at any ecclesiastical gathering or on any theological commission are clergy, might he not be struck by the fact that the single point, which, according to their confession, prevents the unity of the Church concerns what those who are charged with perpetuating or healing the Church's divisions—the ministry—believe about themselves! Might he be tempted to the conclusion that what is required for the unity so fervently espoused is not so much additional argument or further light as downright conversion, conversion of the ministry?

Dr. Van Dusen's suspicion that sinful ministerial pride has something to do with the breakdown of negotiations between churches is surely not without ground. How frequently lay Christians agree, and how often they are forbidden by their ministers to go as far toward union as they would like to go! Greater knowledge of the difficult issues involved may partly account for this greater caution; but professional pride and sectarian prejudice are never wholly absent. Reinhold Niebuhr has warned us of the "persistence of sin in the lives of the redeemed," especially in the form of a pride that grows with every real step upward toward saintliness; the exalted responsibilities and high commitments of the ministry are constant temptations to an unholy pride that irrationally complicates the discussion of valid and invalid orders.

Yet when all this has been admitted, Van Dusen's judgment upon Edinburgh still needs to be qualified by the important observation that *the difference there was more than a one-point difference*. Run through the chapters from II to V inclusive, and you will notice that there is a marked increase in the number of minority objections expressed in footnotes. Both on the Protestant left and the Catholic right (especially in the case of the Baptists and the Eastern Orthodox) the agreements which are apparently complete in the two great theological chapters begin to be beclouded, first by differences in preferred wording or emphasis, then by deep reservations and difficulties, which mount to a climax, but not an unexpected climax, when the final "point" about ministerial Orders is reached. *What we have here is not a one-point difference, but a total, systematic difference*. This was seen by the delegates themselves, and expressed in words that may be said to have given the Amsterdam delegates their cue for abandoning the point system, and formulating a new method of ecumenical study:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Chap. V, p. 17.



We are led to the conclusion that behind all particular statements of the problem of corporate union lie deeply divergent conceptions of the church. For the want of any more accurate terms this divergence might be described as the contrast between "authoritarian" and "personal" types of church.

We have, on the one hand, an insistence upon a divine givenness in the Scriptures, in orders, in creeds, in worship.

We have, on the other hand, an equally strong insistence upon the individual experience of divine grace, as the ruling principle of the "gathered" church, in which freedom is both enjoyed as a religious right and enjoined as a religious duty.

We are aware that between these extremes many variations exist. . . . We do not minimize the difficulties which these contrasted types of church present to our movement, nor are we willing to construe them as being due mainly to misunderstandings or to sin.

Section I at Amsterdam, on "The Universal Church in God's Design," picked up the issue of Church Unity exactly where Chapter V of the Edinburgh Report thus laid it down. It was fortunately able to concentrate its attention upon the one theme Edinburgh found to be crucial: agreement and difference concerning the nature of the church. Otherwise, it could have made no advance upon Edinburgh, as the time available at Amsterdam for theological discussion was necessarily limited. (Constitutional business connected with the setting up of a permanent World Council of Churches had to take priority.) The brief report produced under these rather unfavorable conditions is notable for three main achievements: (1) It locates the "given unity" of the church with new incisiveness in the one Lord who rules it as Head and animates it by his Spirit. (2) It finds the "deepest difference" between Christian churches in two corporate traditions of Christian faith and life, each forming a "self-consistent whole," but "inconsistent with each other." (3) It handles all specific "points" of agreement and difference in terms of a dialectical theory which relates all differences to an underlying agreement, and vice versa. Let us consider these three achievements in turn.

(1) I do not wish to overstress the first achievement. Perhaps it would be sufficient to say that Amsterdam appreciated the "given unity" of the church in Christ her common Lord and Head, as fully as Edinburgh; although the delegates were officially appointed church leaders, bound not to agree to anything their constituents might oppose, whereas at previous ecumenical conferences most of the delegates were convinced advocates of Christian unity, not so directly responsible to their respective churches. Nothing was said at Amsterdam concerning "the Church's one Foundation" that was not said at Edinburgh; but these old and basic truths seem to me to have been fully preserved, and reaffirmed with new

incisiveness and new emphasis. Edinburgh says many excellent things in its Affirmation of Union about common prayer, common hymns, common Scriptures, "a common Christian outlook and a common standard of values," as bonds of Christian unity; Amsterdam passes by these secondary, derived factors and goes straight to Christ without any division of thought. "We are one in Jesus Christ," says the Report, quite simply. "Christ has made us His own," says the Message based on the Report, "and He is not divided. In seeking Him we find one another. . . . We intend to stay together." I believe that the Christocentric character of the Basis of the World Council, evidently the only Basis on which a strong world union of Christian churches could be founded, was largely responsible for this new incisive emphasis. Perhaps also the terrible events of the intervening years, which saw the abortive attempt to rear a whole social structure upon another and horribly different foundation from the one Foundation laid in Christ, had a solemnizing and clarifying effect upon the delegates.

(2) The second achievement is the most central and important. I should like to distinguish here between the adequacy of the appreciation of the total systematic character of our "deepest difference," and the inadequacy of the definition of it proposed in the Report. What students of comparative religion have long recognized, that religions differ as *wholes* and not merely *in detail*, and apparently similar details may have different meanings in different systems—this was first clearly seen at Amsterdam to apply to different Christian traditions. The hint dropped at Edinburgh (Chap. V) was followed out consistently. "One great discovery of our section," says the Introduction, ". . . was that we all hold our particular Christian beliefs in the setting of a *total* way of understanding the Christian faith and life. Each of us comes from a tradition which is a living whole; all the parts of it fit together with all the other parts . . . in the way a body is made up of interconnected limbs, arteries, muscles and so forth."<sup>4</sup> The Report points out that even where Christians of different traditions try sincerely to set aside prejudice and really love and trust each other, "there remains a hard core of disagreement between different total ways of apprehending the Church of Christ"; and "even where the parts seem to be similar they are set in a context which, as yet, we find irreconcilable with the whole context of the other." I believe that the sharp, candid recognition of this fact is one of the most important forward steps ever taken by the ecumenical movement. If we

<sup>4</sup> Amsterdam *Findings and Decisions* (with Introductions and Questions). World Council of Churches, 1949, p. 12. All other quotations are from this same edition.

can henceforth concentrate our attention patiently and persistently upon a few deep differences, we shall save much time and effort in the long run.

I do not feel so confident that "our deepest difference" was adequately defined by Section I. The best definition of it offered at Amsterdam, to my mind, was given in Dr. Craig's introductory speech, presenting the results reached in the preparatory volume, before the debates of the section began. His distinction is between churches maintaining their continuity principally through "direct horizontal relationship with the Twelve whom Christ appointed," and those preferring to maintain it "through a vertical relationship with the living Lord of the Church." This distinction does not exactly correspond to any church's position, whether "catholic" or "protestant," but I repeatedly recur to it in trying to make a rational approach to the Catholic-Protestant issue,<sup>5</sup> and find it enables one to lay out all possible positions on an infinitely divisible line. When this simple twofold distinction was overlaid in the subsequent debates by a threefold distinction between the Catholic-Orthodox, Reformation Protestant, and "free church" conceptions of the church, a great deal of confusion was introduced. As Professor Garrison has pointed out, "the first group is defined by reference to its ecclesiastical structure, the second by its system of doctrine, and the third by the way in which it gets its members and by its separation from the state"—three criteria derived from three separate universes of discourse, so that logical clarity about the difference becomes badly obfuscated. Much further work obviously needs to be done in defining this difference. In further discussions, the original Edinburgh distinction between "authoritarian" and "personal" churches should not be forgotten. Its value is that it relates the ecclesiological issue between Catholics and Protestants to the political issue between the Eastern "order" bloc and the Western "freedom" bloc. Perhaps the solution for church as well as state will be found in the idea of a "responsible" society combining order with freedom.

(3) The last achievement of Section I at Amsterdam consisted in a new method of handling "points" of agreement and difference. The point approach was not wholly abandoned in favor of the total, systematic approach; but special points were seen in a more organic relation to each other. Here, at least, the debates of the section did not confuse the issues but greatly clarified them. The delegates started with lists of possible agreements and possible differences, in parallel columns. Largely due

<sup>5</sup> See my discussions in *Toward a Reborn Church*, pp. 63-67, and *The Ecumenical Review*, Summer, 1949, pp. 374-381.

to Karl Barth's insistence, the attempt was made to see the alleged differences as differences of emphasis within agreements; and the valuable discovery was made that, as ecumenical conversation proceeds, there is a dialectical alternation of agreements in difference, and differences in agreement. The "deepest difference" was found to coexist with some very strong agreements; within these agreements there were important shades of difference: within these differences there was a still deeper unity, so that "Although we cannot fully meet, Our Lord will not allow us to turn away from one another . . . the very intensity of our difference testifies to a common conviction which we draw from Him." While not so basic as the previous achievement, this new dialectical theory should be a great practical aid to future work in the Faith and Order field.

All three of these achievements would hardly be noticeable if we insisted on measuring progress by the "point system." But surely, one result of our study should be the recognition that *progress in Christian Unity should be measured in terms of increasingly deep understanding of difficulties, and increasingly wise and systematic grappling with them.* By these measurements, there was real progress between Edinburgh and Amsterdam.

# The Social Conscience

GEORGE ALLEN TURNER

A DISTINGUISHED BOSTON CLERGYMAN was addressing a convocation of teen-age Christian young people. He pointed out that two generations ago people supposed that Christianity consisted in a certain set of beliefs, or doctrines: the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the inspiration of the Bible, the resurrection of the body, and the like. A generation later, said he, it was supposed that the main thing in religion was a set of rules: avoiding such things as dances, cocktail parties, the movies, and doing such things as going to church, reading the Bible, praying, and witnessing for Christ. Now, he announced confidently, we know that Christianity is a matter of attitude: proper attitudes toward labor relations, race relations, world peace, and a sensitive "social conscience." With this brilliant and incisive analysis, the youthful audience seemed entirely in accord. Was not the speaker a distinguished "authority"? Neither speaker nor hearers manifested the slightest skepticism of the assumption that the latest theological fashion is of necessity the best; all took it as axiomatic that the newest is the truest.

The position herein taken is that Christianity is not merely one or another of these three elements—doctrine, conduct, or attitude—but that it is all three. It is true, of course, that most American Protestants have in the last three half-centuries stressed in sequence doctrine, discipline, and social action; but it does not necessarily follow that the last is more important than the earlier emphases. Truth seldom lies in extremes, certainly not in this case. Readers of the Bible are aware that relationships between man and man are as important as relationships between man and God; in fact they cannot be separated. The recovery of scriptural and historical perspective is imperative in any successful attempt to recapture a wholesome synthesis as a guide in the contemporary scene.

The United States, during the last half-century, has witnessed a tendency to emphasize the importance of the "social conscience" to the neglect of the individual conscience. Evidence of this may be seen in

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the general disparagement of individual concern about one's personal relationship to his Creator, an adulteration of the concept of sin, a directing of laymen to practical activities rather than to evangelism or devotion (except in groups), and a latitudinarianism with respect to personal conduct and self-discipline. Contemporary with this trend has been a distrust among conservatives, fundamentalists, or "evangelicals," as they prefer to be called, in American churches, of everything related to the "social gospel." This has resulted in retention of a concern with individual conscience, among conservative groups, combined with a neglect of social responsibility. Because the "modernists" emphasized collective sins, the conservatives erred in the opposite direction by too exclusive an emphasis on the sins of the individual.

The viewpoint of the religious liberal is well known. Most of them believe that while some concern for social righteousness was evident in the Hebrew prophets and in Jesus, and while it was occasionally manifested in Christian history, yet it awaited the "gilded age" of the nineteenth century for its real birth. To date the "social awakening" at A.D. 1900-10, or its beginning in 1865, for example (e.g., Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism\**), betrays lack of historical perspective. It is true that the theological and economic conditions in America, after the Civil War, were such that the urgency of social action became more generally recognized. That the bland religious liberalism of the twenties is now discredited is quite widely recognized. The notion that science, and liberal Protestantism, would soon build a "brave new world," and that man was destined to move upward and onward inevitably, could not survive the shock of a world-wide economic depression and two world wars. The atom bomb was the *coup de grâce* which converted the "optimistic" liberals into apprehensive apocalyptists as gloomy as the millenarians they had been taught to scorn.

The self-styled evangelicals, however, those who insist upon the authority of the Bible, the importance of personal regeneration, and separation from the world, can ill afford to scorn the insights and social sensitivity which to a large extent is due to the efforts of the "social gospelers." Much less should they remain aloof from a courageous facing of the problems of a complex social structure. Indeed, they cannot be true to Christ nor to the prophetic tradition unless they are both articulate and united in discovering and declaring the will of God in these matters. They cannot salve their conscience or silence their critics by merely point-

\* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940.



ing out historical precedents for the social application of the gospel by pietists and puritans. No treasury of merits of our evangelical ancestors will atone for our own sins of omission. In too many instances we have not entered into the breach ourselves and those that did we hindered.

Modern fundamentalists are sensitive to the criticism that they have neglected the command to love one's neighbor and are indifferent to the social implications of the gospel. Their concern should be rather to inquire whether such criticism is justified. Much of it is. Neglect in this area has exposed contemporary evangelicals to just criticism; it is their most vulnerable flank.<sup>1</sup>

In their current neglect of the social gospel, however, modern evangelicals are not true to their own tradition nor to their own premises. It is to be feared that they have permitted prejudice against proponents of social action to blind them to the crucial issues that demand attention by all men of good will. Many seem to assume that no good ideas, motives, or actions can possibly come from liberal Protestantism and that anything they initiate or endorse is by virtue of that fact self-condemned. To make concessions to one's rival is not necessarily a sign of weakness. On the other hand, a readiness to recognize elements of truth in another's position is indicative of strength, poise, and depth of conviction. Those, for example, who cite Scripture to sanctify racial intolerance and who have nothing but blanket condemnation for every proposal for "fair employment practices" are among the evidences that modern fundamentalism needs to set its house in order.

### I. SCRIPTURE

To such evangelicals biblical evidence should be decisive. Both Old and New Testaments are replete with admonitions to the effect that piety apart from social justice is an abomination. In the Pentateuch warnings against wresting justice from the poor, oppressing the stranger, or taking advantage of the less fortunate abound. To subject a fellow citizen to involuntary servitude is condemned on pain of death (Deut. 24:7), a passage overlooked by ante-bellum defenders of slavery. The prophets are even more explicit in declaring that the only adequate religious attitude is that which balances devotion with social justice (e.g. Isa. 1:11-17; Mic. 6:8). "Shepherds" (leaders) who exploited the "sheep" for selfish ends, and whose lax rule permitted the strong to deny equality of opportunity

<sup>1</sup> A wholesome spirit of self-criticism is developing among some conservatives; e.g., C. F. H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1947.) "... the 'uneasy conscience' of which I speak is not one troubled about the Biblical verities, . . . but rather one distressed by the frequent failure to apply them. . . ." p. 11.

to the underprivileged, were to be "fed with judgment" (Jer. 23; Ezek. 34). In the Writings likewise judges are exhorted to deal equitably (Ps. 86) and Job's climactic assertion of personal "perfection" is based on a sensitive social conscience (Job 31).

The New Testament is even more emphatic in asserting the principle that "he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:18; James 2:8). The rich man whose lot in the world to come compared so unfavorably with that of his poor neighbor Lazarus reached his destination, not because of his wicked acts, but because of his indifference to a neighbor's condition. Conversely, the Samaritan who befriended a needy "enemy" fulfilled the law better than the indifferent religionists. The Epistle of James condemns discriminatory attitudes—such as the seating of worshipers according to their wealth. What would James say to those who would not even permit a worshiper to enter, unless his skin were colorless? The emphasis throughout the Bible is that "he who loves God should love his brother also" (I John 4:21). The biblical doctrine of love for one's neighbor, a love that embraces his total welfare in this life and the next, is not an esoteric doctrine but one of the most prominent themes in Scripture. It was theism, not humanism, nor communism, which caused the Quaker poet to plead:

O brother man! fold to thy heart thy brother;  
Where pity dwells the peace of God is there;  
To worship rightly is to love each other,  
Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.<sup>2</sup>

## II. HISTORY

The voice of history adds confirmation to the position that when the church is most Christian it combines an adherence to the second commandment (love of neighbor) with that of the first. It is significant, for instance, that in the earliest Christian community "distribution was made unto every man according as he had need" (Acts 4:35). Tertullian was able to say that Christians, in contrast to the aristocratic Plato, did "not even play the proud man to the pauper."<sup>3</sup> Instead the Christians presented a unique spectacle to the world by their humanitarian acts. The appearance of hospitals and other humane institutions, where Christian culture prevails, confirms Goethe's observation that "the spirit tends to take to itself a body."

During the fourth century, when Christianity was first legalized, the

<sup>2</sup> Whittier, J. G.

<sup>3</sup> Tertullian, *Apology*, xlvii; cf. Luke 16:14-31.

changes in society, directly attributable to the influence of the Gospel, included the prohibition of Sunday work (A.D. 321), permission to bequeath legacies to the church (A.D. 321), prohibition of heathen sacrifices, and the prohibition of gladiatorial combats (c. A.D. 390). During the days of the barbarian invasions the Church at Rome was the only institution that survived the invasions, and it was the church which supervised the distribution of food to those who were left destitute in the prostrate metropolis. During the Middle Ages also the Church was to a large degree the savior of civilization, one example of Christian influence on paganism being the "Truce of God" which secured cessation of warfare on holy days.

One of the most profound effects of the Reformation was a realization of the worth of the individual. So potent was this influence that some responsibility for the Peasant Revolt is properly attributed to the new leaven of Reformation doctrines. It was the peasants' methods, not their objectives, that were found objectionable. History shows that Calvinism has often fostered a spirit of individualism and independence where its influence has been decisive.<sup>4</sup> Spiritual descendants of the Swiss Reformer have been the most courageous in criticizing the state, thus continuing the prophetic tradition.

The seventeenth century saw the "reformation of the Reformation" in continental Pietism. Here an intensified concern with personal piety was matched by such practical expressions as world missions, popular education, and orphanages. It was the Pietists also who initiated the modern emphasis on pastoral visitation with its concern for the total welfare of the parishioners. Meanwhile in Britain and America the Quakers were manifesting, to an unprecedented degree, that combination of personal devotion and passion for social righteousness that has characterized the movement. John Woolman's *Journal* reveals the practical mystic who possessed that wholesome combination of devotion to God and concern with the less fortunate—in his case the African slaves.

The Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century has been criticized as being more concerned with pulling "brands from the burning" than with extinguishing the fire. It should be remembered, however, that society has become much more complex and that sociological concepts have matured considerably in the last two centuries. The Evangelicals should therefore be judged by eighteenth-century standards rather than by those of the

<sup>4</sup> Troeltsch, Ernst, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*. Trans. by Olive Wyon. The Macmillan Company, 1931. II, 621.

twentieth. It will be remembered too that it was the "holy club" at Oxford, students who read the Bible in Greek and Hebrew so diligently as to be dubbed "Bible moths," who not only attended Holy Communion more frequently than others, but also were seen most frequently in jails and almshouses ministering to both bodies and souls. The established churches were making little attempt to reach the unchurched masses resulting from the Industrial Revolution; and it was the Evangelicals who, by street and field preaching, made these working classes realize that they were *worth* seeking and saving. Among the results of the revival was a new concept of the worth of the individual which found expression in such things as congregational singing, popular education, adult education, orphanages, prison reform (John Howard, 1726-1790), Sunday schools (Robert Raikes, 1735-1811), temperance, and missions. John Wesley chided the medical profession of the day for failure to set up health clinics with "electrical machines" to improve public health. William Booth's synthesis of "soup, soap, and salvation," in the ministry of the "Army," is in the true evangelical tradition. As a contemporary scholar has well demonstrated, the Evangelical Revival was the major factor in stimulating the development of the modern emphasis on the worth of the individual, which is the basis of the democratic idealism in English-speaking countries.<sup>5</sup> W. W. Sweet makes a similar assertion with reference to the contemporary Great Awakening in the American colonies.<sup>6</sup> Among the by-products of the Second Great Awakening in America of A.D. 1800 were the abolition of dueling, temperance societies, antislavery agitation, and the birth of the modern ecumenical movement. Revivalism in America gradually subsided after 1858, but part of the spiritual dynamic it engendered found expression in the concern for social righteousness which has become characteristic of American Christianity.

Missionary history yields even better examples of the combination of evangelistic passion for personal regeneration with a concern for the ethical transformation of society. One example of this combination is the "Apostle of the West Indies," Bartolomeo de las Casas, a young priest who came to Cuba in 1502. A slave owner, he became convicted of personal sin while preaching from the apocryphal text, "he that defraudeth the laborer of hire is a bloodshedder"; he was soundly converted, and began a long career as evangelist and social reformer, working for the

<sup>5</sup> Bready, J. W., *This Freedom, Whence?* American Tract Society, 1942.

<sup>6</sup> Sweet, W. W., *Religion in Colonial America*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1493, pp. 317ff.

emancipation of the Indians.<sup>7</sup> David Livingstone went to Africa as a preacher of the gospel, but was soon made to realize that evangelism could not proceed with the iniquitous slave traffic going unchallenged. He became a missionary-explorer whose life passion was to bring justice and liberation to interior Africa.

Such has been the general trend, the sum of which is to indicate that where the Bible and Christian conscience have exerted their influence there has been a combination of love for God and neighbor, working not in competition but in harmony. In great moments of history prophetic voices have spoken, voicing the Spirit-borne synthesis of devotion and ethics. Does not the Spirit of the Old Testament prophets speak yet in great historical moments, as in "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"?

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;  
His truth is marching on.<sup>8</sup>

Or again—

For heathen heart that puts her trust  
In reeking tube and iron shard;  
All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,  
For frantic boast and foolish word  
Thy mercy on thy people, Lord!<sup>9</sup>

Evangelicals, however, have not always had a sensitive social conscience. In 1743 an earnest Christian wrote from England to "Negroes Lately Converted to Christ," expressing joy at their conversion but giving no evidence of concern for their physical, social, or economic future. A zealous Christian factory owner in the late eighteenth century was so busy with philanthropic activities that he did nothing to improve the inhuman conditions of his "sweatshop."<sup>10</sup>

### III. THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

Conservative, liturgical churches often assume an attitude of pious indifference to social ills and concern themselves exclusively with "spiritual" matters. Ultraconservatives, who are prone to stress separation between church and state, are often indifferent or uncertain about pressing

<sup>7</sup> Barnes, L. C., *Two Thousand Years of Missions Before Carey*. Phila.: American Baptist Publication Society, 1900.

<sup>8</sup> Howe, Julia Ward, 1862.

<sup>9</sup> Kipling, R.

<sup>10</sup> Sangster, W. E., *The Path to Perfection*. The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943, p. 174.



corporate evils and castigate the "liberals" who do concern themselves as "meddling in politics." (Agitation for statutory Prohibition is also meddling in politics.") In this respect neither group can justly lay claim to being in either the prophetic or the apostolic succession. Thus, it is virtually a heresy to declare that where the heart is right with God everything else will take care of itself. The Apostle Paul did not believe in such anti-nomianism, as the practical exhortations which follow his doctrinal statements attest. Religion should begin with the individual, but should never end there. The above cases indicate that it often takes time for "social conscience" to become educated, to mature. Sociology can help define the areas in which unselfishness should work, but Christ must furnish the motivation for unselfish living. As Hocking has observed, humanism theoretically should furnish sufficient motivation to build a better world, but in practice its moral dynamic soon evaporates.<sup>11</sup> The religious dynamic is indispensable. A notable application of this principle is seen in a reporter's analysis of postwar Japan. After noting many instances of Christians capitulating to the Japanese police state, journalist Baker found one exception to the general rule. He concludes:

In all this experience a curious contradiction appears. The most hardened resistance to the political ideology of wartime Japan came from men whose position was primarily religious. The Christians who emphasized social action and political awareness were not the men who stood most firmly in the struggle between justice and injustice on the Japanese political scene. They were able to find moral reasons for supporting the political aims of the state. The Christians whose emphasis had never been upon political or social affairs, however, the ones whose primary concern was God and pious devotion to his kingdom, were the men who made the strongest political resistance within the Christian community in Japan. Their case proves that real political resistance is finally religious resistance, that the revelations of truth for men's society come to men who are first and foremost sure of their relationship to God.<sup>12</sup>

Some will point out that the New Testament ethics is conservative, and that direct social action is never advised. True, but the New Testament was written primarily for the infant church. The Christians were an outcast and later illegal group with no chance of influencing public morals directly. That is no reason why its principles should not be courageously applied when there is a reasonable chance of their being influential. The Old Testament is, in this respect, addressed to a socio-political situation more nearly like our own, and for that reason should be taken to supplement the New Testament pattern.

<sup>11</sup> Hocking, W. E., *What Man Can Make of Man*. Harper & Brothers, 1942, p. 61.

<sup>12</sup> Baker, R. T., *Darkness of the Sun*. The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947, p. 144.

Furthermore, evangelicals or conservatives are often far more advanced and articulate in some areas of Christian ethics than in others. In the temperance movement, in gambling and other forms of vice, they have, for the last century at least, been quite aggressive. Why should not the principles of the gospel be applied in some of the newer areas of social action—militarism, labor-management relations, racism, ecumenics, and the like? Should the church make no effort to influence the ideals and methods of the labor movement? Should it evade responsibility for counseling laymen concerning the Christian attitude toward union leadership?

Perhaps America's most grievous national "cancer" is racism. How many evangelistic preachers have urged a confession of the sin of racial prejudice? How many ecumenical conferences of evangelicals, whether in the Calvinistic or the Arminian tradition, have declared for human rights and equality of opportunity for minority groups? Why the silence—is it due to ignorance of the issues, or complacency (since the whites are "on top"), or expediency? Do not advocates of the "old-time religion" feel remorse of conscience, a flush or moral indignation when "in half the United States Negroes are expected to stay away from white churches"?<sup>13</sup> It is not a matter of geography. Whether racial hatred is manifested in the Northeast (against Jews), in the South (against Negroes), or on the West coast (against Orientals), it is equally sinful and calls for repentance and amendment. Christians cannot remain true to their heritage without being militantly, patiently, and persistently concerned with an un-American and un-Christian caste system.

Liberal Protestantism has made some pronouncements—it has been slower on practice. But what ecumenical gathering of conservatives has gone that far? Does anyone seriously believe that compulsory segregation of races and equality of opportunity actually co-exist? Must new cults or secular communism arise to teach what ought to be thundered from the pulpits of orthodox Christendom? Can any theologian or Bible "exegete" reconcile segregation with the Golden Rule? Are fundamentalists sincere when they profess to find segregation sanctioned by Scripture?<sup>14</sup> Jesus would certainly offend such groups if he were living in the flesh now; for then he defied religious and racial prejudices and speedily acquired the reputation of being a radical—he ate with publicans and sinners, was

<sup>13</sup> *The Sword of the Lord*, Sept. 2, 1949, p. 8 (adv.).

<sup>14</sup> See Holmes, J. W., "Readers Say," *United Evangelical Action*, July 15, 1949, p. 2, and *Ibid.*, February 15, 1949, p. 2.

friendly to Samaritans, and his disciples even ate with Gentiles! Bible readers are aware that, according to Joel and Acts, a general effusion of the Spirit of God, as at Pentecost, ignores barriers of nation, sect, race, and sex. The conscience of true Christians must remain disturbed until they see modern Pentecosts in which even the barrier of race is swept aside. A Christian culture should reflect the indiscriminating lavishness of the grace of God, and in such a culture caste systems have no place. Will the church of Christ bear witness to this truth, even though it may cut across the grain of "the world," or will deliverance have to come from another quarter?

There is, happily, a "stirring in the mulberry trees." Some conservatives have a disturbed social conscience and want to see action come from evangelical quarters.<sup>15</sup> Some Council for Social Action among representative conservative groups would be a step in the right direction. Areas of society in which more gospel light needs to enter include labor relations, race relations, war, ecumenics, and perhaps commerce. While most of us engage in the task of evangelizing the world in our generation, a few of us might well inquire, "Who is my neighbor?"

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<sup>15</sup> Singer, C. Gregg, "A Social Philosophy for Evangelicals." *United Evangelical Action*, January 1, 1949.

# The Achievement of Arminius

LOWELL M. ATKINSON

## I. THE RELEVANCE OF ARMINIUS TODAY

**ARMINIUS HAS A WORD** for our age. His achievement in the seventeenth century is needed in the twentieth century. Confronting a rigorous Calvinism that exalted God by crushing man, Arminius made it clear that the glory of God demands the freedom of man. He refused to entertain a theology that required men to think of God as the author of sin. Returning to the Bible, he condemned absolute determinism as a "novelty" in dogma, contradicted by the Christian gospel which offers eternal life to all who choose to believe in Christ.

In our time, transcendental theology once again threatens to crush man in order to exalt God. Once again men think of the rights of God, rather than the God of right. The demon of the absolute tempts us with the thought of a God so transcendent that human intelligence is helpless to discuss or discover him. The sense of political helplessness in war-devastated areas encourages the view that human freedom is a poor thing. All-or-nothing philosophies lead men through unnecessary despair to unwarranted assurance. Calvinism is resurgent and Auguste Lecerf in his *Introduction to Reformed Dogmatics* (1949) calls for a Christian dogmatics that must be Calvinistic and Reformed.

Arminius has a message for our time. Few people seem to know what it is. Histories of doctrine are meager in their accounts of Arminius. It is not easy to find good editions of his works. Vague thoughts of Pelagius come to men's minds as they place Arminius as the critic of Calvinism. Some believe that Arminius repudiated predestination. Actually, he held strongly to predestination, and repudiated Pelagius. Just as his colleague Gomarus condemned him before he knew what Arminius believed; and just as the Synod of Dort in 1618 condemned Arminianism without giving it a hearing, so modern men are likely to dismiss Arminius before he has had his day in court.

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## II. THE LIFE OF ARMINIUS

Arminius was born in Oudewater, Holland, in 1560, died October 19, 1609, in Leyden. His year of birth was Melanchthon's year of death—a suggestive coincidence, for much of Melanchthon's moderateness of doctrine and spirit may be found in Arminius.

The events of his life are quickly told. His father, a middle-class cutler, died while Arminius was an infant. A succession of sponsors provided for the young boy, so that he received an excellent education and constant encouragement.

The University of Leyden was founded February 6, 1575, by William I, Prince of Orange, and Arminius was enrolled there as a student. He lived with a clergyman, the father of P. Bertius, who later wrote a life of Arminius and delivered his funeral oration. Arminius was a student at Leyden for six years, making an outstanding record, so that at the age of twenty-one he was sent to the University of Geneva for further study. His advance schooling was arranged by the Burgomasters of Amsterdam, under the patronage of the Guild of Merchants. At Geneva, he studied in the stronghold of Calvinism, and attended the lectures of Theodore Beza, champion of rigorous predestination.

Arminius and a fellow student made a seven-months' journey into Italy, possibly to be differentiated from other such student exploits by the fact that Arminius carried with him a Greek New Testament and a Hebrew Psalter, and attended lectures at the University of Padua. They visited Rome, and were horrified by the evils they saw there. In 1587, Arminius was in Amsterdam again.

Able trained, Arminius now began his lifework. For fifteen years he served as pastor of a great church in Amsterdam, and the remaining six years of his life, he occupied the chair of Theology at the University of Leyden. As a preacher he quickly won renown for the clarity and moderateness of his biblical expositions. Men called him "the file of truth," "a razor to cut down the budding errors of the age," for he seemed the very embodiment of wholesome religion and the foe of fanaticism.

In 1589 occurred an incident of decisive importance for the "file of truth." Holland was then a center of theological activity, and the dominant doctrine was Calvinism in its supralapsarian form. A criticism of this ultra-Calvinism was advanced by Theodore Koornhert of Amsterdam, and Arminius was invited to prepare the reply. As he grappled with the problems involved in predestination, he became convinced of the unethical



character of arbitrary damnation as an expression of Divine Power, and he found himself in agreement with the views he was required to refute! From this time on, Arminius was occupied with the problem of predestination, and going back to the Bible and the Church Fathers, revived the classical Christian doctrine of Divine Grace and the freedom of man.

In 1602, Arminius was invited to become Professor of Theology at the University of Leyden. After much careful thought and prayer, he decided to accept this invitation. From 1603 until his death in 1609, he served with distinction at Leyden. He became the first Doctor of Divinity created by this university. His teaching was marked by simplicity and moral earnestness and constant application to Scriptures and the Church Fathers.

But always there was the problem of the contentious and rigorous Calvinists. One of Arminius' colleagues, Gomarus, spoke with bitter and unbridled tongue about Arminius in the presence of the dignitaries of the university. When pressed, however, Gomarus admitted he had not heard Arminius speak, nor had he read his writings. The dangerous spirit of the time was revealed by the extreme statement of a pastor, "We ought to entertain fears about all things, even about those which seem to be safe and secure." Arminius moved with quiet though anxious spirit through this turbulent life, teaching earnestly, thinking deeply, and writing about his great insights on grace and freedom. In 1608, he set down in three writings his views, goaded to this action by constant misrepresentation by enemies. His *Letter to Hippolytus*, *Declaration of Sentiments*, and *Apology*, are the three basic writings setting forth his Christian position.

The life of Arminius really does not end with his death in 1609. In the following year his friends published the Five Articles of the Remonstrants, an ethical criticism of Calvinistic determinism. In 1618, the Synod of Dort got revenge by banishing all Arminian pastors. Yet Arminianism lived on in the Anglican Church and in the Cambridge Platonists. It was powerfully revived by John Wesley in the eighteenth century. It is the working philosophy of practically all Protestant churches today, and the avowed theology of the leading churches of England and the United States of America—the Anglican and the Methodist denominations respectively.

It seems bizarre to us that in 1603 Arminius was persecuted by the Gomaristic party for teaching "that the God of mercy wills the salvation of all men." The truth which Arminius taught now lives in the basic assumption of the Christian world.

## III. THE SPIRIT OF ARMINIUS

There is something dramatic and exciting about the mildness of Arminius; for it is the mildness of a lamb among wolves. In the midst of hard and rigorous men, he was ever "the amiable, pacific, and learned Arminius," yet not without a quiet and almost fierce intellectual and spiritual strength which suggests the wrath of the lamb. He was never vanquished in debate, once he had clearly grasped his great truth that Christ died for all, and that every man is given freedom by God's grace to respond to that great Deed of love.

In the midst of theological odium and turmoil that kept the church in constant restlessness and frequent schism, Arminius maintained an irenic spirit and counted every wound in the body of the church a personal hurt.

Arminius the pastor was concerned lest the consequence of despair be the relapse from Christian faith into atheism or Epicurism. His concern with the errors of Calvinism was deeply practical as well as intellectual. He saw clearly the morally unhinging possibilities of a determinism that relieved men of freedom and hence released men from responsibility. In 1603, he wrote to Uitenbogert that the grace of God must bring forth faith in man, otherwise "the operation would be expended on a stone or a lifeless body, and not upon the intellect of a man." In another letter, he deals directly with the moral problem: "For I am only contending against that necessity which cannot exist except by a physical determination, which takes away human liberty, and on that account operates as an excuse for his sin that was made inevitable."<sup>1</sup>

By no means are we to think of Arminius as alien to human frailty; he is a man, not an archangel. Yet it is almost impossible to find in his writings a touch of malice. In his latest disputations, one does have the sense that he is raising his voice slightly, but nowhere does he retaliate in kind to his foes who gloated over his illness as God's deed of punishment. There is just one delightful touch, with which we conclude this part of our discussion, which suggests in a very subtle way the immense inner satisfaction he enjoyed in a downright establishing of his doctrine of human responsibility in the presence of his tormentor and colleague, Professor Gomarus. He is telling his friend, Uitenbogert, of a recent disputation:

We have also, within the last few days, held a disputation on "The Sin of our First Parents." I composed the Theses myself, as you will easily perceive from

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 695 (Note).

their style and order. I have used much freedom in them; but I indulged myself in still greater liberty in the course of the Disputation. For, I openly confuted "necessity" and established "contingency," before both Gomarus and Trelcatius; I wish that you had been present.<sup>2</sup>

In these last words of the letter—"I wish that you had been present"—we hear the human voice of a man speaking to his friend, with the assurance of complete understanding, and with only the faintest and most delightful suggestion of such delicate malice as would make the angels smile!

#### IV. THE UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION OF ARMINIUS

In his own day, Arminius provided an ethical criticism of Calvinistic predestination. With unwearied insistence Arminius asserted the grace of God and the freedom of man. Calvinism was so obsessed with the idea of the sovereignty of God, that it quickly came to the completely unethical and nonbiblical position that God has rights, but no obligation to the right. Retreating from the world of revealed truth into the dim recesses of the unrevealed world before time, the Calvinists spoke confidently of "secret decrees" and the like, all of which were beyond man's ethical judgment. Bishop Overall reports a pertinent comment of King James I in this regard:

"It seemed to him a token of great rashness in men to enter into such scrupulous contests about questions of this kind relating to Divine Predestination, and to employ such rash assertions about them as though they had just descended from heaven after having assisted at the Divine Council-Board. This just and weighty sentiment of His Majesty excited the approbation of all the Bishops who were present."<sup>3</sup>

In Calvinistic predestination the doctrine of the grace of God suffered from hardening of the arteries. As Melancthon said, it was a revival of Zeno and the inscrutable "fate" of the Stoics. God's will was placed above God's character. Man's will was abolished, and the Calvinistic universe consisted of One Divine Person enjoying the dubious glory of exercising his absolute power by sending some conscious but helpless puppets to heaven and sending other conscious but helpless puppets to hell.—There is a great truth in the Calvinist stress upon the awful sovereignty of God. God is his own interpreter, and his thoughts are above our thoughts, and his ways above our ways. Clouds and darkness are round his throne. But when God wished to make himself fully known to men, he came in the form of a loving Savior and not as a terrifying and numinous Mystery. He came with an invitation, not an inscrutable decree. There is song and joy in Christian worship, because of the moral mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, Vol. II, p. 150 (Note).

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 412 (Qu. in Note).

The mood of double predestination is the awful dark mood of the devotees of Moloch, faces drawn with dread in the ghastly blue light of dancing flames, while their loved ones pass through the fire before their God. So the devotee of irresponsible sovereignty watches most of the human race pass through the fire before a deity unrelated to the Christian gospel. There is no moral meaning, based on the choice between faith and unbelief, only that awful, dark dread of the deity. Again there is a truth here, for God's Name must ever be hallowed, but it is a truth that must be rescued from those who would make it into an obsession. It must be related to the revelation in the gospel, and to the facts of our human experience. When Arminius' successor, Episcopius, talked to John Hales about John 3:16, Hales was converted from Calvinistic predestination, and said, "There I bid John Calvin good night!"

It was the achievement of Arminius to redeem the doctrine of grace from unethical interpretations and to restore the biblical doctrine of the God who is eager for the salvation of all men, and who requires that men use their God-given freedom to turn to him.

Arminius was primarily a pastor and teacher rather than an author, and he published very little indeed. Had not his enemies circulated false opinions under his name, he might have published nothing at all. In order to clear himself of charges of heresy, he wrote three important "apologies" in the year 1608. They are *The Letter to Hippolytus a Collibus*, *The Apology*, and *The Declaration of Sentiments*. Here we have a clear, concise, powerful exposition of orthodox Christian doctrine, with especial emphasis on the true doctrine of predestination and human freedom. The complete works of Arminius were published posthumously by his nine orphan children in 1629. They include the "Public Orations at the University of Leyden," his commentaries on Romans, Chapter VII and Chapter IX, the "Conference with Junius," "Refutation of Perkins," "Disputation with Gomarus," and vast numbers of theses. It is only fair to say that Arminius' total position may be found in the three apologies of 1608, and the arguments recur over and over again in the other works. It will be helpful to refresh our minds by consulting these works as to what Arminius actually said and meant.

In the "Declaration," he begins by identifying the foe, and announces the four assertions of the supralapsarians that are to be refuted. They are:

A. That God has absolutely and precisely decreed to save certain particular men by His mercy and grace, but to condemn others by His justice; and to do all this without having any regard in such decree to righteousness or sin, obedience or disobedience, which could possibly exist on the part of one class of men or of the other.

B. That for the execution of the preceding decree, God determined to create Adam, and all men in him, in an upright state of original righteousness: beside which, He also ordained them to commit sin, that they might thus become guilty of eternal condemnation and be deprived of original righteousness.

C. That those persons whom God has thus positively willed to save, He has decreed not only to salvation but also to the means which pertain to it: (that is, to conduct and bring them to faith in Jesus Christ, and to perseverance in that faith;) and that He also in reality leads them to these results by a grace and power that are irresistible, so that it is not possible for them to do otherwise than believe, persevere in faith, and be saved.

D. That to those, whom, by His absolute will, God has foreordained to perdition, He has also decreed to deny that grace which is necessary and sufficient for salvation, and does not in reality confer it upon them; so that they are neither placed in a possible condition nor in any capacity of believing or of being saved.<sup>4</sup>

Arminius replies that such a doctrine is contrary to the Bible promise of "the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth," and "they who believe shall be saved." To save unjust men by arbitrary act is to love men more than justice. To damn men irrespective of their faith is to destroy the justice which is the foundation of the divine glory. He denies that God wills unconditionally to damn men.

The nature of man is dishonored by such doctrine.

Such a doctrine of Predestination is contrary to the nature of man, in regard to his having been created after the Divine Image in the knowledge of God and in righteousness, in regard to his having been created with freedom of will, and in regard to his having been created with a disposition and aptitude for the enjoyment of life eternal.<sup>5</sup>

All biblical admonitions such as "Do this, and live" (Rom. 10:5) are absurd and false if man is not free to render to God the obedience of faith. The doctrine of absolute predestination is inconsistent with the freedom of the will, "for it prevents the exercise of this liberty, by binding or determining the will absolutely to one object."

The doctrine is opposed to the biblical portrayal of rewards and punishments. Such promises as "the reward of obedience" (Matt. 5:12), "the labour of love," "the recompense of those who fight the good fight" (Rev. 2:10), are based on the thought of man as free to accept or reject God and responsible for his use of freedom.

If man is determined in his total life, sin is impossible, and condemnation of sin unethical. "Because sin is called disobedience and rebellion, neither of which terms can possibly apply to any person who by a preceding divine decree is placed under an unavoidable necessity of

<sup>4</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 554.

<sup>5</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 561.



sinning . . . . sin is the meritorious cause of damnation."<sup>6</sup> This predestination is repugnant to grace

. . . . because Grace is so attempered and commingled with the nature of man, as not to destroy within him the liberty of his will, but to give it a right direction, to correct its depravity, and to allow man to possess his own proper motions, while on the contrary, this predestination introduces such a species of grace, as takes away free-will and hinders its exercise.<sup>7</sup>

Grace is offered to men, not forced upon men, as is evidenced by the Scriptures affirming that grace is capable of "being resisted" (Acts 7:51) and "received in vain" (II Cor. 6:1), that man may refuse it (Heb. 12:15; Matt. 23:37; Luke 7:30).

Now we come to the very heart of the matter in the assertion that the doctrine of unconditional predestination, far from glorifying God, actually dethrones God. Here we have Arminius' most characteristic polemical assertion about Calvinism, variously stated as "God is the author of sin," "God really sins," "God is the only sinner." God is the only free Person in a universe of puppets, hence the responsibility of sin falls on him. "For man, who is impelled by an irresistible force to commit sin (that is, to perpetrate some deed that has been prohibited) cannot be said to sin himself."<sup>8</sup>

Arminius defines sin clearly as "the transgression of the law" and quotes St. Augustine with approval, "Sin is so far a voluntary evil, that it can by no means be a sin unless it be voluntary."

Not only is unconditional predestination destructive of the glory of God, but it dishonors Christ as Savior. He ceases to occupy the central place in history. His cross ceases to be crucial, his saving death ceases to be decisive. Before men can say "yes" or "no" to the invitation of the Savior, all has been determined, and the work of Christ is merely the

<sup>6</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 564.

<sup>7</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 564-5.

<sup>8</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 566. (Also cf. pp. 641, 661 (Note), 698, Vol. II, pp. 40, 64-5; Vol. III, pp. 74, 281, 359, 657 for some other instances of this emphasis.) It is interesting to see how confidently Arminius goes back to the Fathers to substantiate his views. According to Eusebius, the assertion that "God is the Author of sin" was made in A.D. 180 by Florinus and contraverted by Irenaeus in his "God, not the Author of Sin." Arminius also quotes Augustine, "Against the Pelagians," both to establish the doctrine of grace and the doctrine of freedom. For instance, man's sin is real because man's freedom is real—"Which of us affirms that free-will is perished utterly from mankind by the fall of the first man?" "Freedom indeed is destroyed by sin, but it is that freedom only, which we had in paradise, of having perfect righteousness with immortality." "He, who made thee without thy help, will not save thee without thy concurrence." These quotations are all from Augustine.

Christopher Potter (1629) wrote, "I was specially nettled with this confident appeal to antiquity. Upon this occasion, I betook myself to notes and exceptions, and in truth, found nothing in them that favoured those opinions that I favoured (Calvinism); I observed many shrewd and pertinent passages alleged by the Arminians, even out of St. Augustine and Prosper, and upon trial, found their quotations very faithful." (*Works*, Vol. I, Qu. p. xxx.)



execution of an already determined decree. But this is an inversion of the gospel revelation. The gospel promises that whosoever repents and believes in Christ will enter eternal life. It does not say that because you are fated for eternal life, you must go through the motions of repentance and conversion, impelled by irresistible grace. A marginal note by Arminius reveals how clearly he saw this inversion of the gospel. "Question: Do we believe, because we have been elected? Or, are we elected because we believe?"

The practical consequences of Calvinistic fatalism were ever in Arminius' mind.

How can a preacher present the gospel invitation if neither he nor his congregation believe anyone has freedom to accept it? If no response is possible, no invitation is significant. The nerve of evangelism is cut; preaching is a pronouncement of fated doom for most men. Further, those who believe themselves "elect" may well suffer from unethical complacency; while those who believe themselves "damned" may well suffer from unnecessary despair. "These two—despair and carnal security—are the greatest evils to be avoided in the whole of religion." In his pastoral experience he had faced with his parishioners the problem of anxiety and dread, unrelieved by a belief that Christ died for all. In one of his latest writings, he objects violently to doctrines of Beza and Calvin that produce such hopeless feelings. "It is a horrible affirmation that 'God has predestinated whatsoever men he pleased not only to damnation, but likewise to the causes of damnation.'" Again, "It is a horrible affirmation, that 'men are predestinated to eternal death by the naked will or choice of God, without any demerit on their part.'" He charges that even the supralapsarians have no answer to the charge that God's character is destroyed when man's freedom is taken away. "Beza himself confesses it to be incomprehensible how God can be free from blame, and man exposed to blame, if man has fallen by the ordination of God and necessarily."

To this doctrine of fatalism, then, Arminius firmly opposes the biblical doctrine of the gracious God and responsible man. He insists that however mysterious God may be, he is above and not below our human standards of decency. His revelation makes it clear that he wills to offer grace to every man.

This has been a brief statement of Arminius' negative criticism of extreme Calvinism. Much of his positive position has already emerged. He holds all the classical doctrines of orthodox Christianity. For the sake

of clarity, we may now look directly at his own doctrine of predestination, so as to understand the positive position he champions against Calvinism.

For Arminius was a firm believer in predestination. But whereas Calvinism held to an unconditional predestination, Arminius found in the Bible a conditional predestination. "With respect to the article of predestination," says Arminius, "my sentiments upon it are the following. It is an eternal and gracious decree of God in Christ, by which he determines to justify and adopt believers, and to endow them with life eternal, but to condemn unbelievers, and impenitent persons."<sup>9</sup> This is practically a paraphrase of John 3:16, and it represents Arminius' doctrine of the gracious purpose of God toward men. "In the Gospel," he says, "no other predestination to life and to death is taught, than that by which believers are destined to life, impenitents and unbelievers to death."<sup>10</sup>

In no sense does Arminius minimize grace. "I ascribe to Grace the commencement, the continuation and the consummation of all good, and to such an extent do I carry its influence, that a man though already regenerate, can neither conceive, will or do any good at all, nor resist any evil temptation, without this preventing and exciting, this following and co-operating grace."<sup>11</sup> It is at this point that Arminius openly differs from Pelagius. He believes in grace; Pelagius does not. "I profess," says Arminius, "that I detest from my soul the Pelagian dogmas . . . ." Nothing could be clearer than these words: "I account the sentiment of Pelagius (perfection without grace) to be heretical and diametrically opposed to the words of Christ, 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' " But grace is a proffered goodness, and not just an irresistible force.<sup>12</sup> Calvinism held that grace was irresistible. Arminius was quick to point out that to destroy man's freedom is to take from human life all meaning. Indeed, if Calvin were right, then no one could blame Arminius for being in error, since he was caught in the grip of an immutable determinism and could not choose to do and think other than he did!

Arminius thought of free will in man as the power to respond to God's grace. He concurs in Luther's pithy statement: "The creature co-operates with God when He operates." God works in us, but not without us. For an example, Arminius suggests this: "A rich man bestows on a poor and famishing beggar, alms by which he may be able to maintain himself and

<sup>9</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 698.

<sup>10</sup> *Works*, Vol. III, p. 651.

<sup>11</sup> *Works*, Vol. I. p. 600; also cf. Vol. II, p. 19, etc.

<sup>12</sup> *Works*, Vol. II, p. 722.

his family. Does it cease to be a pure gift (grace) because the beggar extends his hand to receive it (free will):"

The pivotal importance of the nature of man was ever in Arminius' mind. Can man exercise a real freedom to accept or repudiate God? Or is man a puppet in the hands of a Divine Sovereign who may exercise his authority by placing the puppet in hell or heaven, regardless of any moral consideration? "For the whole controversy reduces itself to the solution of this question, 'Is the Grace of God a certain irresistible force?'"<sup>13</sup> If man is free to resist grace, as Arminius believes, and all of us know from experience, then man is responsible for sin. If man is unable to resist the Divine grace, then the responsibility for the world's sin falls back upon the one free Person, who is God. But Arminius believes that God is the author of good, and that man creates evil by abusing his freedom. In his important letter to Hippolytus a Collibus, he states,

"But I most solicitously avoid two causes of offence—that God be not proposed as the author of sin, and that its liberty be not taken away from the human will. These are two points which if any one knows how to avoid, he will think upon no act which I will not in that case most gladly allow to be ascribed to the Providence of God provided a just regard be had to the Divine pre-eminence."<sup>14</sup>

That he himself could keep an admirable balance between the grace of God and the freedom of man is evident, and we adduce but one more passage.

Those who are obedient to the vocation or call of God, freely yield their assent to grace; yet they are previously excited, impelled, drawn and assisted by grace. And in the very moment in which they actually assent, they possess the capability of not assenting.<sup>15</sup>

If one asks why men were created free, he would reply "that rational creatures may know, love, worship God their Creator and live in bliss with him forever." And while "it is not good that there should be sinners, yet it is good that God should permit to creatures, created with liberty of choice, the use and enjoyment of their liberty."

Arminius insisted that the gospel promise of new life offered to all men through the ministry of Christ was the only true doctrine of salvation. That Christ died for all, and that no man who gives himself in faith to the Son of God would be repudiated, were to him basic Bible truths. As for the Calvinist doctrine of a limited atonement, Arminius flung it from him. If God created some men solely to damn them, then he manifested both

<sup>13</sup> *Works*, Vol. I, p. 600.

<sup>14</sup> *Works*, Vol. II, pp. 697-8.

<sup>15</sup> *Works*, Vol. II, p. 722.

"stupidity and folly," and contributed to his own dishonor. "It is horrible even to think such a thing of the Creator," he exclaims. God is actually the Highest Good and creates in order to communicate his goodness. But if—as Calvinists alleged—it be otherwise, "God is the supreme evil . . . because He willed some to be damned at the same moment and point of time as He willed others to be saved. What baser charge could be invented against the good God?"

The unique achievement of Arminius was the recovery of the biblical doctrines of universal salvation for all who accept Christ, and human freedom to hear and heed God's voice in responsible loyalty and faith. It was at these points of resistance to supralapsarian Calvinism that Arminianism was distinctive. "Its specific contribution," says Frederic Platt in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, "was of sufficient importance to rank it amongst the few really outstanding and permanent developments in theological thought." He ranks Arminius with Athanasius and Augustine for the significance of his emphasis. Arminius had renewed the vitality of that truth of the Divine Grace offering eternal life to free men that not only avoids the unhappy extremes of Pelagianism and Manicheism, but gives to all of life a tonic sense of moral responsibility and spiritual hope. No age could benefit better than our own from making vital in its own living experience the profound insights of the Christian religion to which Arminius gave such lucid and distinguished expression.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

*The Works of James Arminius*, translated from the Latin by James Nichols, London. Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1825.

"To which are added, Brandt's *Life of the author*, with considerable augmentations; numerous extracts from his private letters; a copious and authentic account of the Synod of Dort and its proceedings; and several interesting notices of the progress of his theological opinions in Great Britain and on the Continent."

*Volume I*—706 Pages.

The principal works of Arminius in this volume are "The Five Orations at Leyden," the "Declaration of Sentiments," and the "Apology against Thirty-One Articles." However, the volume also contains a wealth of materials and lore concerning Arminius and his age. Of first importance are the letters of Arminius to his famous friend Uitenbogert—"The Dutch Cicero." These letters are worthy of a volume by themselves. Here they appear in footnotes, along with much other valuable material. Mr. Nichols, who was an industrious layman, seems entirely innocent of the arts of editorship. In this volume, one suggestion might be to use the footnotes as the text, and the text as footnotes!

*Volume II*—754 Pages.

This volume contains "Twenty-five Public Disputations," "Seventy-nine Private Disputations," "Dissertation on 'Romans' Ch. 7," "Letter to Hippolytus a Collibus," "Certain Articles to be Weighed." For the general reader, the "Letter to Hippolytus a Collibus" contains Arminius' total religious position, clearly and succinctly stated.

*Volume III*—658 Pages.

James Nichols died before his work was done, and the third and final volume was translated by his son, William Nichols. The important writings included here are "The Conference with Junius," "An Examination of Dr. Perkins' Pamphlet on Predestination," "Analysis of 'Romans' Ch. IV," "Examination of the Theses of Dr. Gomarus respecting Predestination." This last work is an extremely spirited and forceful discussion of the problems of determinism and freedom in Christian theology.

The comment of William Nichols upon his task is too good to be omitted: "Though the work of translation had at first been a little tedious and irksome to me, from a certain sameness and dryness of matter incident to the nature and form of these discussions, compared with many parts of which the dullest and lengthiest history might be accounted light reading; yet, as it grew on my hands, I could not but feel a strong attachment to the able divine who, fearless and persevering, had stuck so nobly to the vocation marked out for him, and after patiently undermining the outworks of his opponents, had attacked and destroyed their very citadel. Perhaps nothing in his writings strikes the reader more forcibly than the unhesitating faith with which he appeals to Holy Scripture as the arbiter of all controversy, and accepts its decision as final, and the loving spirit in which he treats his adversaries, while ruthlessly uprooting their flowers of false rhetoric and their weeds of bad logic." (Pref., p. vi.)

# The Fifth Evangelist

ALLAN G. BURT

THIS YEAR THE TWO-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY of the death of Johann Sebastian Bach is being celebrated by great symphony orchestras and huge choral societies throughout the world. It is appropriate that churchmen should pause to estimate the man from their own point of view, since his life and work mean more to the church than to any other institution in the world. Although Bach wrote an abundance of music for concert and pedagogical purposes, his most distinctive claim to fame rests upon his having given the Protestant church the best of its music. That his genius found its highest form of expression through the medium of the Protestant church carries with it a certain weight of responsibility. Every pastor, minister of music, and organist should have an insight into what makes the name of Bach great in history and what he means to the present.

On July 28, 1750, Johann Sebastian Bach died. He had just finished dictating to his son-in-law an organ composition based on the hymn tune, "When in the hour of greatest need," which the blind and dying Bach had entitled, "I come before thy throne." The announcement of his death was read from the pulpit of the Thomaskirche, where Bach had played the organ for twenty-seven years: "Peacefully and blissfully departed in God the Esteemed and Highly Respected Mr. Johann Sebastian Bach, Court Composer to His Royal Majesty in Poland and Serene Electoral Highness in Saxony, as well as Capellmeister to the Prince of Anhalt-Cöthen and Cantor in the Thomasschule, at the Square of St. Thomas's."

Thus ended in Leipzig a life devoted to a ministry of music and a talent consecrated to the glory of God. Not only had Bach served churches at Arnstadt, Mülhausen, and Leipzig as organist for a total of thirty-two years, but during that time he had composed organ and choral music especially for use in the church service. Even as court organist to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar, Bach indirectly served the church, for the Duke was deeply interested in the building of churches and was quite willing to grant Bach frequent leaves of absence to serve in an advisory capacity in the building of church organs.

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## I

In his biography of Bach, "The Fifth Evangelist," Karl Hesselbacher presents a picture of Bach as the musical counterpart of the Gospel writers. Such a picture is readily understood when we remember that Bach wrote four musical settings of the Passion of our Lord. However, only two are extant, the *Passion According to Saint Matthew* and the *Passion According to Saint John*. Today the phrase "Passion music" is usually linked with the name of Bach, although other musicians have written their versions. Handel composed two, and Kuhnau, Bach's immediate predecessor at the Thomaskirche, had tried his hand at one. Probably the earliest setting had been that of an Englishman, Richard Davey, organist of Magdalen College, Oxford, from 1490 to 1492.

In 1530, Johann Walther, at the request of his friend Martin Luther, produced settings according to the texts of Matthew and John. Luther had known the Passion in its plainsong setting, with a text from all four Gospels which the medieval Church had developed from the tropes. However, Luther characteristically insisted that the text be limited to one Gospel account, or at the most two, and in the vernacular tongue. Walther's version was succeeded by that of Antonio Scandello's *Passion According to St. John* in 1561, which was followed by many others, the most important being that of Heinrich Schütz, born exactly one hundred years before Bach. Schütz, under the influence of Italian opera, broke away from the traditional forms and introduced the aria, duet, and recitative, set to texts from all the Gospels. He also employed an unaccompanied chorus singing words that were explanatory of the story or commented upon it. This meditative and nonbiblical character of the text, nurtured by the impact of pietism, reached its dénouement in Teleman (1681-1767), reputed composer of forty-four settings of the Passion, one of which was a three-part version entitled, *Blissful Reflections Upon the Sufferings and Death of Our Lord*.

Bach was too staunch an orthodox Lutheran to be guilty of centering his attentions on the reflections and comments about the death of Jesus rather than its biblical narration, although he was influenced by both the Italian opera and pietism. For Bach, contemplation of the Passion was an act of worship, performed not only *for* but *by* the congregation. His immediate predecessors and contemporaries had eliminated or minimized congregational singing, replacing it with solos and duets, albeit using the hymn text. Bach partially restored the meditation on the Passion to the congregation by employing the congregation's traditional song, the chorale,

which the congregation sang in unison, while the choir, organ, and orchestra supplied the varied harmonies which Bach changed according to the needs of the text. For example, he employed the chorale, "O sacred head now wounded," five times in the St. Matthew Passion and each time gave a slightly different harmonic or melodic "twist," depending upon the place in the narrative. Bach gives the congregation an opportunity to worship and show their adoration to their Lord by singing fifteen chorales in the St. Matthew Passion and thirteen chorales in the St. John Passion.

By making the congregation an integral part of the Passion music, Bach revealed himself to be a true disciple of Luther. Just as Luther had restored the priestly function to the people after it had been usurped by the clergy and choir, so did Bach return the chorale to the congregation. At the time of his death, Bach possessed in his extensive library the complete works of Martin Luther. He had probably read avidly Luther's *Table Talks*, particularly those sections praising music as that "art next to theology." In the Reformer's writings on Christian Liberty he had linked music with the grace of God, with the experience of God, and with Christ's act of salvation. Bach could fully appreciate Luther's drawing an analogy between an organist's practicing and performing and the contrast of "love" and "law." Wrote Luther: "That the law works wrath is evidenced by the fact that Georg Planck (an organist at Zeitz) plays better when he plays for himself than when he plays for others; for what he does to please others, sounds from obedience to the law and where there is law there is lack of joy; where there is grace there is joy."

The passage from Luther's pen which must have caught the eye, the mind, and the heart of Bach was that "God preaches the gospel through music." The Passions of Bach are essentially sermons in music, and are masterpieces of exegesis. At his best, Bach, like every great preacher, tries to give his text an emotional setting that will illuminate its meaning, and thus become for his hearers a means for spiritual elevation. Bach eagerly grasped every opportunity the text afforded him to present a definite picture to the mind's eye. A metaphor, a picturesque phrase, a simile, are all utilized by Bach like an artist using the various paints on his palette. Bach's music not only expresses, but, in the fullest sense, illustrates the text.

In the St. Matthew Passion, when Christ foretells his impending betrayal and the anxious disciples ask falteringly, "Is it I?" Bach has the congregation sing:

Yes, I.  
 The torture that awaits Thee,  
 The thongs that soon shall bind Thee,  
 Myself should bear, I know full well.

What preacher would not consider his sermon great if he could get his congregation to make such a personal application of the text?

## II

In discussing how the text shapes and determines Bach's musical idiom, Robert Franz writes:<sup>1</sup>

In his church works Bach calls to his aid a treatment of musical forms which is peculiar to himself. A form does not merely furnish him the means of producing a concrete picture of the idea contained in the text, but he imputes to it a special significance. He thus sublimates the traditional forms by bringing their structural plan into an immediate relation with the inner meaning of his subject. One need have no hesitation in setting up as a general rule, that the more ingeniously complex the forms he employs are, the more surely one can count upon there being a corresponding startling thought behind those exceptional means of expression.

Bach's sensitivity to textual implications is beautifully illustrated in his cantata, *Christ lag in Todesbanden* ("Christ Lay in Death's Dark Prison") which he wrote for his first Easter service in Leipzig. The entire work is based on the hymn of the same name as found in Paul Wagner's (1697) eight-volumed Hymnbook. The tune *Christ ist erstanden* is one of the earliest German hymns and is found in various forms as early as the twelfth century. It was a favorite of Martin Luther, who said that "after a time one tires of singing all other hymns, but the *Christ ist erstanden* one can always sing again."

The hymn text of *Christ lag in Todesbanden* is largely the work of Luther, who described it in the book in which it first appeared as "the hymn *Christ ist erstanden* improved." Only slight traces of *Christ ist erstanden* are retained in Luther's hymn, most of it being entirely original. Julian refers to it as "a hymn second only to his (Luther's) unequalled *Ein' feste Burg*." Both the text and the tune are employed by Bach as the basis for each of the eight movements of his cantata. In this work Bach spurns all solo singing and writes the arias for unison singing by different sections of the choir. Choir directors who complain that Bach's cantatas cannot be sung because they demand outstanding soloists should note that when Bach lacked capable soloists, he substituted the various sections of the choir.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Franz, Robert, *Mittheilungen über J. S. Bachs "Magnificat"* Halle, p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see the writer's article, "Bach for the Average Church Choir," in *The Pastor*, May, 1950.

*Christ lag in Todesbanden* is one of 295 church cantatas from the pen of Bach. All together they represent forty years of labor. As a general rule, the church cantatas consist of an orchestral introduction, a great chorus that is frequently developed from the hymn tune upon which the entire cantata is based, recitatives and arias for various voices, and finally the hymn itself in a simple setting to be sung by the congregation. As a writer of recitatives, Bach stands pre-eminent. Other composers may have pushed recitative to a more dramatic brilliancy, but in narrative, and particularly didactic recitative, Bach is the master. The recitatives in his cantatas carry more conviction with them, more spiritual admonition and exhortation, than many sermons.

Sanford Terry, who has made a detailed and exhaustive study of Bach's church cantatas, says:<sup>3</sup>

The cantatas disclose the fact that his [Bach's] astonishing fecundity was controlled by searching and frequent pondering of the text he set. They reveal the keenness and clarity with which he visualized Bible scenes and characters. How consistent and devotional, for instance, is his portrayal of the Saviour's gracious dignity. . . . With what tender touches he points the scene of the Nativity. And with what poignant emotion he follows the Saviour's footsteps to Calvary.

In Bach's treatment of the human voice, he never seems to do anything at random. Take his church cantatas as a whole, and one finds that Bach writes arias and recitatives for the contralto in a different character from those written for the soprano. The character and spirit of the text are different. The same is true of his writing for the bass and the tenor. Each of the four voices seems to be identified in Bach's mind with certain psychological conditions and with a particular phase of religious sentiment. By merely reading the text of an aria, one can often predict the voice Bach will employ in writing the music.

Bach's keen perception of the adaptation of means to ends is probably best illustrated in his instrumentation. Of course his orchestral means were stunted. He was constantly pleading with the town council of Leipzig to grant appropriations for the minimum number of instrumentalists in order to give a proper performance of the music. Regardless of his limitations, Bach's instrumentation is telling and significant, showing a most effective economy of forces to create a sensitively delicate and sympathetic accompaniment. Turn to the Passion music and see how exquisitely he can make a pair of flutes or an oboe, with a few strings, supply the silvery cloud to an angelic aria, or a soft quartet of strings shed a resplendent

<sup>3</sup> Terry, Sanford, *The Music of Bach*. Oxford University Press, 1932, p. 5.

halo round the head of Jesus when he speaks. For trumpet splendors, turn to the "Magnificat," to the opening joyful exhortation of the *Christmas Oratorio*, to the soaring, flaming "Sanctus" in his B-minor Mass.

The *Christmas Oratorio*, with its trumpet-toned opening chorus, "Christian, be joyful," is properly a series of six cantatas for the Christmas season. This work is unique in that it unfolds the Gospel narrative with lyrical commentary in six "parts," one of which was sung as the cantata on Christmas Day, on the two following days, the Circumcision, the Sunday after Circumcision, and Epiphany. The form of this work is related to that of the Passions, consisting of chorales, free choruses, recitatives and arias. It contains some of Bach's most inspiring and beautiful music. The chorus, "Glory to God," epitomizes all the joy associated with the Christmas festival. Nowhere is Bach's Lutheranism more clearly revealed than in his treatment of the chorale, "In poverty He came to earth," the melody of which is accompanied by poetical figures on the shepherd's pipes, while the dark notes of suffering sound already in the bass solo.

The cornerstone of Bach's church music is the chorale. The term "chorale" refers to a genus of congregational hymn and is derived from the responses of the choir in the medieval church called "cantus choralis" or simply "choral" (but usually spelled with an added "e"). To appreciate the influence of the chorale upon Bach, we should know something of its origin.

In the fourth century, Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, undertook to reform the music of the Western Church, and under his leadership the Ambrosian chorale emerged. It was joyous and used for congregational singing. Kummerle says,<sup>4</sup> "The echo of these (Ambrosian) time-honored church songs has without doubt been preserved in the chorale melodies of the evangelical churches."

Under Gregory (elected Pope in 590) Ambrosian song was absorbed and supplanted by another type of chorale, the Gregorian. It must be admitted that some modern scholars insist that neither Ambrose nor Gregory wrote the music which bears their names. The terms "Ambrosian" and "Gregorian" may have meant simply that the music was in use respectively at Milan and at Rome. Nevertheless, what we call Ambrosian and Gregorian chorales were sources from which Martin Luther drew heavily for music in compiling his hymnbooks.

There were, however, other sources of the Reformation chorale—folksongs, hymns of the Bohemian Brethren, and originals by Johann

<sup>4</sup> Kummerle, S., *Encyklopädie der evangelischen Kirchenmusik*, p. 94.



Walther, Martin Luther, and others. The chorale is essentially a fusion of various types. Howard Kunkle says:<sup>5</sup>

It (the chorale) has an inherent dignity that defies cheap familiarity, much as a magnificent cathedral defies flippant familiarity. This is the heritage from plain-song. . . . From folksong the chorale inherited rhythm and melody, which plainsong did not possess, and which is also an echo of Ambrosian song.

The chorale as Bach knew it was due largely to the genius of Martin Luther. According to Canon Douglas, Luther practically created the chorale.<sup>6</sup>

He possessed in a pre-eminent degree a gift for writing hymns of the liturgical type. Even his paraphrase of parts of the Holy Scripture were so free, so poetically powerful in the idiom of the people, that they are really new creations. . . . When there is added to this a positive genius for trenchant and forceful melody, supported by adequate musical training, and an almost unparalleled personal force, we are no longer surprised at the tremendous hold that Luther's hymns soon obtained in Germany.

To see how Bach used the chorale as material or subject matter, we must turn to his *Choralevorspiele* or organ preludes, in each of which a chorale melody is given out line by line, framed in poetic counterpoint, with imaginative interludes between the lines. Bach did not make use of the traditional forms of the chorale prelude. He was influenced, however, by his predecessors—Pachelbel who treated the chorale prelude as a series of fuguettes whose themes together constitute a chorale melody, Böhm who covered up the chorale melody in a wealth of ornamentations, and Buxtehude whose chorale fantasies were full of virtuoso effects.

With the chorale preludes Bach created a form of his own based on the motive which, in Bach's mind, best expressed the idea of the text. Schweitzer considers that the ideal of the chorale prelude is realized in Bach, and refers to his work as "*das Wörterbuch der Bachschen Tonsprache*" ("the glossary of Bach's musical language"). In the chorale preludes Bach's fancy takes its highest flight and expresses itself just as admirably in ingenious counterpoint as in simple figures. For tenderness and power, exultation and sorrow, Bach seems to find the most poetical motives and accents. Thus he teaches us to confess, "*In dir ist Freude*" ("In Thee is joy"), and to cleanse our hearts from the stain of sin, "*O Mensch, beweine dein' Sünde Gross*" ("O man, bewail thine errors great").

Paul Lang says:<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Kunkle, Howard, *The German Chorale in Congregational Worship and Musical Art Forms*. M.S.T. Thesis, Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1936, p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Douglas, Winfred, *Church Music in History and Practice*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935, p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Lang, Paul Henry, *Music in Western Civilization*. W. W. Norton & Company, 1941, p. 504.



. . . if we wish to penetrate the gigantic yet graceful, dark yet warm-toned cathedral of Bach's life work, we must pass by the main portal. It is through the side door of the sacristy that we must enter, and as we pass through the mystic dark of the winding staircase to the friendly and intimate organ loft, we shall find the place that was closest to his heart. It is in the lyric poems called chorale preludes that Bach expressed his most personal and profound utterances.

### III

Bach was not always serious. Outside the precincts of the church, his genius found expression in works of fantasy and comic humor—the secular cantatas. He wrote numerous birthday and wedding cantatas, full of picturesque allusion in the music. Some of these secular cantatas reveal a talent for gaiety and humor which sometimes approaches the boisterous. Many of them possess an individuality of their own seldom found, in so great a degree at least, in the more serious works. Thus, in his secular cantatas Bach gave full rein to his individualistic tendencies, whereas in his church music he subdued the element of self-expression and concerned himself with an exposition of the Word.

In Bach we see how a great mind and character find their expression in the field of music. To those who think that the musician must be a creature of impulse and excitement, a dreamy, moody, egotistical enthusiast, wholly at the mercy of his emotions; to those who think it incongruous to seek a model of a manly and true life in a musician, we commend the music and life of Bach. He was an excellent father, friend, and citizen. His hospitality, even to humbler fellow artists, was without stint or ostentation. His modesty was proverbial. When asked how he acquired such mastery over his art, he would reply, "I was compelled to be industrious."

Bach never mistook his calling. He fulfilled it with sobriety and earnestness of purpose, with courage and cheerfulness, and with dignity. He seemed to be incapable of superficiality and apparently was free from ambition and love of fame. He did not, like many of his contemporaries, travel throughout the world, but remained in the land of his forefathers. He did not seek a position commensurate with his talents, nor was his choice of positions determined solely on the basis of a "raise."

For example, when he left his position as Capellmeister at Cöthen for that of Cantor at Leipzig, the change was not in the nature of a promotion, but it gave Bach more opportunity for composing church music and afforded his children a chance for an education in an orthodox Lutheran school. While Bach's famous contemporary and erstwhile neighbor at Halle, George Frederick Handel, was bringing out Italian operas in

London, Bach was engaged in a humble, unexciting, obscure service at Leipzig. Here at the Thomasschule, founded by Martin Luther, Bach put all the resources of his art and genius into making music solely for the glory of God. He employed the Passions, the cantatas, and the oratorios as vehicles to express in music the most characteristic emotions and concepts of the Christian's religious experience, with specific references to its articulation in the Christian Year. In using and perfecting these musical forms which German artists had been developing since the Reformation, Bach did not value formal beauty for its own sake alone, but meant that it should be, like the sacraments, the outward sign of an inward grace.

It is significant that Bach wrote these works expressly for use in the divine service. The main service (*Hauptgottesdienst*) of Bach's churches in Leipzig included the cantata or Passion as an integral part of the order of worship. Both the St. John's and St. Matthew's Passion have two main divisions: Part One to be sung before the sermon, and Part Two after the sermon. This partly accounts for the striking contrast between the church music of Bach and a great deal of present-day church music which seems to be written largely as "occasional" music, with no thought of its relation to the service as a whole. One hears in Bach the note of a victorious personality, but a personality constantly holding itself subject to divine law, and keeping its place in the divine order. There is in the recitatives and arias, in the choruses and chorales, none of that disturbing restlessness which plays, as in too much modern church music, on our sentiments and emotions and leaves us in a tumult or a stupor.

In Bach we find individual repose and faith in the supreme order of the universe; refuge from skepticism and doubt, a refuge which is like Luther's fortress; free expression of personality without the fever of egotism; the supremacy of order and unity above all selfish desire and craving for individual happiness; the delineation of Spinoza's dictum, "renunciation once and for all in the presence of the Infinite."

Celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of Bach's death this year loses its significance, unless it shall become the starting point of a new impulse to a more constant and intimate acquaintance with the church music of Bach. In this day of multifarious and distracting novelties which too often are the basis of contemporary church music, a revival of Bach's music could have a wholesome and steadying influence. To know the Passions, the cantatas and the chorales well, to hear them often, will be our best protection from the superficiality and the vainglory of "new" things which astonish and intoxicate far more than they edify and strengthen.

# Lloyd Douglas and America's Largest Parish

CARL BODE

## I

"I AM NOT ABANDONING THE MINISTRY, but expect to give my time to a larger parish than may be addressed from a pulpit," Lloyd Douglas wrote ten years ago as he underlined the religious and moral purpose of his novels. Whatever its purpose, literary critics have not as a rule taken Douglas' work seriously. This is because his writing is too often gaudy in its emotional effect, superficial in its characterization, and marked by lapses in literary taste. Though it should be added that he has improved in his last two novels, *The Robe* and *The Big Fisherman*, many of his deficiencies remain. It is enough here to say that most reviewers have either ignored Douglas or else scoffed at him, and in terms of pure literature they are probably right. However, for anyone who is a student of the relationship between contemporary American religion and contemporary American literature, Douglas' importance is great.

In sheer popularity he towers far above any other American writer of the present time who has a religious bent. Several of his novels have become best sellers against considerable commercial odds. One novel, *The Robe*, has had a phenomenal success; more than two million copies have been printed. And so far, *The Big Fisherman* too has done remarkably well; 540,000 copies are already in print. There can be no doubt that he has actually reached the largest parish of any American minister preaching today. That has apparently been true from the very first, and his initial novel, *Magnificent Obsession* (1929), provides tangible proof. In it Douglas made a biblical reference that was obscure to many of his readers. Although *Magnificent Obsession* sold slowly in its first year, more than two thousand people took the trouble to write to the author personally during that year to ask him about the reference. A decade after its publication, *Magnificent Obsession* had, according to a publishers' estimate, been read by two million persons. How many were influenced

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by its sermon no one can be sure, but it can at least be said that many were exposed to it. Without doubt, some who read the book ignored the "message" and simply followed a rather unusual story. Nevertheless, the bookshops always had a large variety of novels in stock—novels without a religious purpose—and only a handful of them surpassed the popularity that *Magnificent Obsession* and its successors from Douglas' pen achieved.

An attempt to find out exactly what kind of religion Douglas has been preaching in his novels both directly and indirectly ought to cast light on current American religious attitudes and desires, particularly among the middle class, from which most of the book buyers are drawn. It should tell us something about what they want and what they respond to. Lloyd Douglas once said that Americans are "spiritually wistful," and it can certainly be argued that the success of his novels shows that he is right. It is also true that no one can determine exactly what a people's attitudes are, but that fact should not keep suggestions about them from being made.

Specifically, then, Douglas' books are useful in two ways; they help to answer two major questions. The first is, What kind of religious message do middle-class readers find most acceptable? The second is, What kind of minister do they find most appealing in the books they choose to read?

## II

To convey his message, Douglas employs the novel form as if it were a traditional sermon adorned with examples, but the examples, of course, bulk far larger than the text of the sermon. Instead of stating his doctrine to the reader directly, he gives the exemplification of the doctrine dramatically. He demonstrates it through the actions of his characters. In this way his impact on the reader is personalized and is greater than it otherwise would be, and his message is normally apt to be remembered longer. As a matter of fact, Douglas uses all the instruments at the popular novelist's command—suspense, sharp change of action, alternation of mood, and the technique of the flash-back, among them. The exemplifications are given with the vigor and drive of a natural storyteller.

The sermon Douglas first preached to his readers came out of the Sermon on the Mount. In *Magnificent Obsession* he centered on the verses in Matthew 6 where Jesus speaks about doing good without expecting reward and without making the good deed public. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Through the figure of Dr. Wayne

Hudson, portrayed as a brilliant brain specialist, Douglas developed and dramatized this idea. It is the key to the full life, Dr. Hudson was told by a sculptor, one Randolph. However, where Jesus had preached abnegation and self-denial for the sake of life after death, Douglas—although disclaiming any debasing intention—made it clear that service to others would be followed by success for oneself. Virtue, in other words, was more than its own reward. The good deeds that Dr. Hudson did had to be kept secret, but their favorable effect on his career was manifest. So, to quote Douglas, "Doctor Hudson . . . became obsessed with an idea . . . that his professional success depended on certain eccentric philanthropies which had to be kept secret to be effective." Similarly, he risked his professional future by doing a precedent-breaking brain operation on Natalie Randolph, the sculptor's daughter—this, incidentally, being in a later book, *Doctor Hudson's Secret Journal*. The operation succeeded and it received three pages of laudatory notice in the next Medical Encyclopedia.

To the harried middle-class reader at the depth of the depression this made welcome reading. In place of the relatively stern and self-denying doctrine he could hear in most of the churches, *Magnificent Obsession* and its successors painted a vivid picture for him of the fact that the universe meant well and that human nature was basically good. Given these assurances, the reader was told that he could generally work within himself to conquer the spiritual and economic ills that beset him. God appeared as a rule under the guise of "the planners of the universe" or else was simply referred to as "They." At crucial moments, in several of the novels, a character was enabled to make contact with Them; then he was inspired and could draw on the strength outside of him for a new invention, for example, or a new trick of surgery. Or he might even have a mystical experience, of a sort. This constituted the acme of Douglas' religious representations and occurred very rarely. But it did occur; and there is an excellent example of it in *Magnificent Obsession*, by way of the case of Dr. Robert Merrick, who had inherited Dr. Hudson's responsibilities. In a crisis it seemed to Merrick "as if a pair of great double-doors, somewhere at the far end of a dark corridor in his mind—in his heart—in his soul—somewhere inside of him—had quietly parted, shedding a soft, shimmering radiance upon the roof, walls, and pavement of the long hall." Thus Merrick received the impulse he had longed for.

This mild kind of venture upon mysticism was as far as Douglas would go for many years. Moreover, it was not until the writing of his



last two novels that he touched on the supernatural. He avoided the conflict between science and religion during most of his career as a writer by minimizing the biblical miracles and referring to parts of the Old Testament as legends or stories. In this way there was no burden placed upon the reader's belief, and through the tutelage of Douglas' fiction he was able to dismiss everything supernatural except that which was sanctioned by psychology; he was freed from adherence to a literal Bible.

Douglas went on to give his reader still another assurance. Having demonstrated the benignity of the universe to him, he also demonstrated the fundamental benignity of the individual human being, both from a psychological and a religious point of view. No serious problem of evil existed in any of Douglas' novels up to the time of *The Robe*. Few people were bad in his fiction; and if they were, they customarily reformed before the end of the book. His view of human nature was the complete opposite of the Calvinist's. In *The Robe* and *The Big Fisherman*, however, the problem of evil was faced more frankly. In fact, Douglas recognized evil through his very choice of subject. He pictured the martyrdom of St. Stephen, for example, in *The Robe* and the sufferings of Jesus in *The Big Fisherman*, and added depth to his writing by doing so. In place of a reassurance emphasizing this world, he began ultimately to emphasize the next.

It might be expected that this facing of realities in *The Robe* would diminish Douglas' appeal for his readers. So far it has not, and there are at least two different reasons for the fact. One is the appeal made by the Roman pageantry, the standard attraction of the historical novel, to which Douglas has added a false freshness. The Romans parade in burnished armor but talk just like the characters in his earlier novels. The other is the fact that we were at war by 1942, when *The Robe* was published. It is difficult indeed to calculate the effect of a changing climate of opinion; yet it can be maintained that in that time of death and threatened national disaster, the reading public was ready for more than a happily ending morality play.

Now, in *The Big Fisherman*, the problem of evil is presented to an even greater degree. In this story of Christ's developing ministry and of Simon (the "Big Fisherman") and his gradual conversion to belief in Jesus, Douglas paints a picture of suffering and death—and, incidentally, of the supernatural. Furthermore, his message to his readers has altered entirely. The easy promise of material success is gone and its place is taken by an exemplification of the whole Sermon on the Mount. At this writing



it is hard to say how popular so profoundly humble a doctrine will be with the middle-class reader, but my guess is that in spite of its tremendous early sale, *The Big Fisherman* will not be quite the commercial success that *The Robe* was.

Over all, it can be seen that Douglas has grown as a didactic novelist in these last years. His teaching has lost its ready optimism and its simple appeal. It has come a good deal closer to fundamental Christian theology, especially in *The Big Fisherman*. He has announced that this is his last book; in a sense it rounds out his development.

### III

Self-portraiture is characteristic of many a novelist, and Lloyd Douglas could certainly be pardoned if he developed an ideal minister for his novels in his own image. It would be no surprise if the main character turned out to be an energetic Protestant clergyman, leader of a large parish and active in his community. The interesting thing is that this did not happen at all.

True, Douglas had at least one reason, which he stated when writing about his first novel, *Magnificent Obsession*: he did not want to repel the layman by anything ecclesiastic. Consequently, the only man of the cloth in that novel, the Reverend Bruce MacLaren, occupied a minor position. He was revealed as a modernist who had emancipated his congregation from rigid ritualism but had failed to give them a true religion in its place. He and Dr. Merrick held a long conversation in which Merrick's mystic psychological experience was intended to make MacLaren's intellectualized religion seem pale and futile in contrast.

It was actually Dr. Merrick, consequently, and before him Dr. Wayne Hudson, who had the real religion. One of the most interesting aspects of Douglas' ideal minister lay in the fact that he was by profession a physician—a scientific minister to both body and mind. Douglas was attracted by the medical profession to an almost obsessive degree. He had mastered some of the more common medical terms and worked them into his writing wherever he could. He had acquired some acquaintance with medical schools, and one novel, *Disputed Passage*, dealt mainly with the process of medical training. *Green Light*, like *Magnificent Obsession* and *Disputed Passage*, had a physician as hero—young Dr. Newell Paige—and Dr. Wayne Hudson of *Magnificent Obsession* was also, it may be recalled, given another novel all by himself, *Doctor Hudson's Secret Journal*. In a space of ten years half of Douglas' novels dealt with doctors.

In *Disputed Passage* Douglas subdivided the profession and made quite clear what type of physician was most to be admired. The central character was Jack Beaven, whose progress as medical student, interne, and specialist was described in a wealth of detail. The antagonist to Jack was his long-time instructor in medical school, stubby, harsh Dr. Milton Forrester. Because Forrester was mechanistic in his approach to life and research-minded in his approach to medicine, he became an unhappy and maladjusted man. The proper foil to him developed toward the close of the novel in the person of Dr. Bill Cunningham, who was a general practitioner, a healer of mind as well as body, and therefore shepherd to his informal flock. Jack Beaven was allowed to see that Cunningham was on the right path and Forrester was not; and *Disputed Passage* ends with even Forrester experiencing a mild conversion.

Over all, the desideratum for Douglas was a physician—a scientist—who had felt the emotional force of religion and was thereafter qualified to act as minister in ordinary. By the use of the physician as symbol, moreover, Douglas was able to smooth over the conflict between science and religion for his readers. It became one of his most effective devices.

#### IV

In his obvious desire to ignore the customary Protestant minister as a leading figure and vehicle for his message, Douglas developed not one but two general conceptions as time went on. The first, just discussed, was that of the doctor as minister. Gradually another emerged to balance it; it too was not that of the expected Protestant pastor. It was instead embodied in the imposing figure of Dean Harcourt, a fine Anglican churchman, of metropolitan Trinity Cathedral. The dean was an aristocrat among his kind but he revealed great human sympathies. To him came people different in many ways but alike in that they needed counsel. Dean Harcourt gave it with unvarying success.

Although the dean played a role of some importance in one of Douglas' earliest novels, he was the outstanding character in *Invitation to Live*, which was published in 1940. He occupied an almost Olympian place as he benevolently manipulated the lives of those who came to him. As a matter of fact, his wisdom and common sense as noted in *Invitation to Live* ran higher than average for a counselor in Douglas' fiction. Not surprisingly, the advice he gave in his oak-paneled library had little to do with the Thirty-nine Articles. Instead he preached the customary doctrine of service to others—with reward for self—under the inspiration of a

kindly universe. As he said once about his own experience to Dr. Newell Paige, "I have suffered—but I know that I am Destiny's darling!"

That Douglas was taken with the character of Dean Harcourt is easy to see. He represented formal, professional religion but religion without any of the "folksiness" that Douglas had learned to dislike. In *Doctor Hudson's Secret Journal* he commented wryly on the "joyful noise" of most Protestant services in contrast to the ecclesiastical dignity of Dean Harcourt's service. Indeed, in another novel Douglas traveled further from Nonconformity and described a Roman Catholic service with considerable sympathy. Anyone watching a Catholic or Episcopalian ritual, Douglas also remarked, knew that he was at any rate in a church, not in a Y.M.C.A. or ethical club. It is evident that the so-called democracy which Douglas had observed in Protestant practices made less and less appeal to him. Although he himself had served large nonconforming congregations, he maintained in a little manual of advice for ministers which he wrote years ago that the average minister holds himself too cheap. He bows to the businessmen and busybodies of his congregation; he demeans himself by asking weakly for money; and in most ways he is content to sit below the salt. Such was, for instance, the Reverend Miles Drumm ("poor Uncle Miles!") of *Forgive Us Our Trespases*. Dean Harcourt did none of these things nor did his cathedral require them.

Douglas continued to feel strongly about the dignity of ministers, and this is noticeable even in *The Robe*, which appeared almost a generation after the manual just mentioned. In *The Robe* he once describes Simon's asking the Ecclesia for money shortly after Jesus' death. Stephen criticizes Simon to the man next to him. "Did you notice that weak solicitous smile on [Simon's] face as he entreated them to be more generous with their gifts?" he asks.

Otherwise, however, Simon was characterized in *The Robe* as a strong, sincere shepherd; and in *The Big Fisherman* his growth into an ideal minister of the Gospel is traced with care. He is shown at times to be impatient, slow to believe, and—once at least—quick to deny. Nevertheless, his stature increases steadily, and he emerges as a dignified and powerful figure, one destined to guide his flock and protect it. Here, then, in *The Big Fisherman* Douglas displays his final conception of the ideal Christian leader. It is a picture that was partly anticipated in *The Robe* by the hero Marcellus in his brief and idyllic ministry in the little Roman town of Arpino, but in *The Big Fisherman* we have a full-scale and notable portrait. The doctors and the dean are forgotten and in their place Douglas

puts a figure of great strength and constantly growing understanding. Just as Douglas' view of Christianity in his novels has deepened with the passage of time, so has his view of the ideal minister. Both the message and the messenger have revealed a new earnestness.

The importance of the role Douglas has played in the relating of contemporary American fiction and religion can be underestimated all too easily, both by the critics and by the clergy. A greater realization of what religion means to Americans today can be gained by studying him. And yet that realization may not be entirely pleasant, for Douglas has something uncomfortable to say directly to the American ministry. As Dean Willard Sperry of Harvard has noted, "Douglas is a comment upon the failure of the professional ministry to state its case in an effective popular form that appeals to laymen—we offer them only a stained-glass figure of Jesus, drawn in a formal theological pattern." A good many people read Douglas and go to church as well, but it is rather clear that many more read him instead of going to church.

## A Review of the Quarter's Fiction

JOHN C. SCHROEDER

FOR THOSE OF US who still have buried within our consciences a deep vein of Puritanism, the reading of novels generally seems a temptation to which the sober spirit ought not to capitulate. We may try to rationalize, if the temptation proves too enticing, by persuading ourselves that esthetic as well as moral demands are also compelling. There are, however, several novels in this list which deserve spiritual as well as artistic attention and which will satisfy the headiest moralist.

*The Wall* is a noble book. It is a compelling recognition of the valiant human spirit in the face of inconceivable cruelty and horror. One is reluctant to say that *The Wall* is a great novel; but certainly in dealing with a theme so tragic and in proclaiming a faith so heroic, it must be regarded as a most significant book. *The Wall* is the story of the Warsaw ghetto during the horrible years from 1939 to the end of the war. When the Germans came into the city, the Jewish community suddenly realized that they were being walled in. Thousands of Jews were forced into the small area, and soon typhus and starvation began to take their toll. The Nazis forbade funerals, and the dead, their clothes removed to provide protection for the living, were picked up from the streets by a special service. Then the *Judenrat*, under penalty of being shot, were forced to supply 6,000 people daily for "resettlement for work in the East." More and more cruel penalties were exacted until by 1942 more than half the population had been liquidated. Finally, in 1943, 650 of them rebelled, and with a small stock of ammunition fought the Germans, Balts, and Polish police. The ghetto was sacked, every remaining Jew was shot, and only a few made their escape through the sewers.

All this history of inhumanity we read in the newspapers. But John Hersey has transmuted it into a great human document. It is told through the Journal of Noah Levinson, a nearsighted, shy, awkward, bookish man, who gently loves his fellows and who knows how to enjoy the simple humanity of people, neither bitter about their shame nor

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impatient with their weaknesses. The structure of the novel is awkward, since the reader has to become used to the curious mosaic of the excerpts from the Journal and is bound to be a little incredulous that Noach should have been able to keep at it through the long succession of horrible days. But in it, all the glory and littleness of the members of the community are revealed. They are, or were before they were forced into the ghetto, prevaillingly a middle-class group. (Mr. Hersey gives us little insight into the Jewish proletariat.) Apt, once a wealthy jeweler, who uses his diamonds for bribery and eventually for escape; his daughters, one pretty, the other plain; and his sons. The Bersons, he who was once a pianist and his pretty wife, who is stricken with typhus. The members of the *Judenrat*, who have to try to maintain order, while they are driven to desperation by the sadistic pressures of the Nazis. Rabbi Goldflam, learned and legalistic and pathetic, whose loyalty to his profession makes him both compassionate and heroically active. These and many others become alive in Noach's descriptions. Their domestic joys and troubles, their resignation in the face of their helplessness, their love of their religious tradition, their little hopes which light the darkness of their horror—all this makes us realize that people can be human and merciful and brave in situations actually beyond our ability to comprehend.

Noach loves the great traditions of his people and reflects their magnificence not only in his learning but in his moral insight. He compasses the wide spectrum of his people's experience, "reading from the lowest pogrom-insect to Spinoza and Einstein and Christ." Or again he writes, "What I wanted to do was to move our small group of disparate men and women out into the great universe of Jewishness, so that we might take a short vacation from our self-pity and (perhaps) have compassion for the masters of Hollywood and pity for the marvellous Einstein and feel sorry for all who are more comfortable and more noticeable than we. Not as superiors, not in condescension; as fellow human beings, in full humility, and pitying those others . . . because of the humanity they share with miserable beings like us. I thought this feeling might do us good."

Not the least impressive aspect of *The Wall* is Mr. Hersey's feeling for Jewish culture. Not only has he learned a great deal about it, but he has revealed how a Gentile can come to live with it and appropriate it as part of his own treasure. *The Wall* is a Gentile's attempt at atonement for all that the Jew has suffered at the hands of Christendom. For this, all good men are grateful.

*The Horse's Mouth* is advertised as a gay, comic book. But it is a much wiser and incisive delineation of human character than that. It is the final volume of a trilogy, preceded by *Herself Surprised* and *To Be a Pilgrim*. Gully Jimson is a mad, wise, amoral painter. As a young man, he painted several canvases which have become very valuable. But since then, he has lived on the edge of penury. His studio is a ramshackle boathouse. He is forever in and out of jail, in trouble with the police for one reason or another. Property and money mean nothing to him: he is as ready to steal as he is to give away what he has. Someone always has to take care of Gully, and someone generally does—a poor homely barmaid; a young art student; old Sara Monday, who in her youth was his model and wife of sorts; or a solemn young man who hopes to write his biography. Gully is a genius whose only passion is to paint. Cary is extraordinary in his capacity to make the reader see color and form through Gully's eyes; and even though it were nothing else, the book would be an excellent guide for an understanding of painting. Gully's madness makes the prudential wisdom of the sane look like foolishness. His anarchy, moral and political and social, is an antinomianism authenticated by a passion for creation. Gully is forever quoting William Blake, and the divine spiritual fire of that mystic finds contemporary expression in this wayward and delightful sinner.

Perhaps when wisdom is deep enough, it always has a comic element. The true saint never takes himself seriously, and the complete artist must always be able to laugh at himself. When Gully appropriates the apartment of a millionaire art patron who is away, shares the place with a sculptor as mad as himself, pawns the furniture in order to buy food, and then goes into a fine creative frenzy and paints a mural of *The Raising of Lazarus*, the narrative is raised to that high point where there can be no difference between laughter and tears.

Gully's moral anarchy raises him above all prudential and worldly wise concerns, so that he can view all life with Olympian detachment. He makes many wise observations. "When shares go up, pictures sell. There is a rush for spiritual nourishment." "Pride is a good chest protector but a bad bicycle." "Fame is a grass that grows in any dirt, when no one's looking." "(A bus is) as good as a Rolls. Better: higher and not the same responsibility not to run over the poor." "Artists owe a debt to millionaires that can never be repaid, except in cash."

One of my colleagues insists that Joyce Cary is the great contemporary Protestant novelist, whose fundamental themes are grace and freedom,

as opposed to moralistic doctrines of salvation through good works. One is bound to assert that Gully is an extreme illustration of these two great spiritual affirmations, and any moralist would be quick to point out that the Gullys of this world can bring only chaos to it. But for those who would understand the meaning of "Her sins which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much," Gully might help. Whatever else *The Horse's Mouth* may be, it is an extraordinary delineation of a character, a remarkable insight into the poetry of William Blake, an adventure into subtle perception of color and form, and a great deal of hearty laughter.

*The Diplomat* is not a good novel. Nevertheless, I read the first part of it with great interest and could not resist judiciously skipping through the rest of this long book to pursue the importance of the theme it seeks to develop. Lord Essex has been sent by Britain to Russia to try to protect British interests and oil in Azerbaijan in the face of a revolution which has probably been fomented by the communists. Our world is the kind of world where the fate of millions rests upon the decisions of a few men—the diplomats whose success or failure has such momentous consequences. Lord Essex is suave, urbane, shrewd, and sure of himself. But all this does not mean that he lacks moral sense. As an expert for the mission, he takes with him Ivre MacGregor, a geologist who grew up in Iran and had a distinguished record in the war and who possesses all the qualities of the classic Scotch moralist. In Moscow, the mission meets the resistance of Molotov, who persuades MacGregor of his integrity and who resists Essex as an emissary of imperialism. It is at this point that the two Englishmen begin to break. Essex, whose actions seem Machiavellian, after all is consistent with his unconsciously accepted premise that Britain and her tradition are necessary to hold the world together. MacGregor seems noble, but he is churlish. He will follow the truth, but in doing so will miss the nuances that come from human perceptions and feelings. Stalin finally agrees to let them go to Azerbaijan to investigate the situation at firsthand, and they go off on the adventure with Kathy Clive, a cynical, bright charmer of whom both men become fond. They get involved in dangers with the Kurds, and eventually the enmity between the two men breaks into open conflict in an improbable climax before the House of Commons.

*The Diplomat* deals with a problem which is beyond the book's capacity to resolve. Russia seems to come off better than Britain; at least, its representatives seem to possess greater integrity. There are excellent

descriptions of the terrain and the life in Iran. The reader will be deeply disillusioned if he concludes that it is through missions like this that the relations among nations are established. What is clear is that the Essexes face the most complicated of moral tangles, the issues of which are so involved that no clear resolution is possible. As an insight into the Russian-Western conflict, this book seems to promise nothing except a cold war which will become icier and icier.

*Prince of Egypt* is the story of Moses, projected against a vivid and knowledgeable portrayal of the Egypt which King Akhnaton ruled. It was a sumptuous and sophisticated civilization. Moses, as one of the young princes of the court, receives the training of royalty. He learns how to be a military leader of consequence. He is taught the secrets of the Egyptian priesthood and becomes a miracle worker of great skill. He falls in love with the wilful Nefretiti, through whose companionship he grows up in a familiarity with all the subtleties of worldly knowledge. It is when he is exploring the mysteries of the hidden city of the hated Akhnaton that he discovers that he was a child of the Hebrew slaves. Mrs. Wilson seeks to give the Mosaic law historic continuity by tracing it back to the monotheism which Moses got from the Egyptian religion. The Old Testament miracles are given naturalistic explanations in terms of the lore of the Egyptian wonder-workers. The tension in Moses' spirit is generated in the conflict between his power, given him through his life in the Egyptian court, and his inward moral struggle. Akhnaton's monotheism leads him to a respect for persons and a feeling for individual rights.

It is a difficult matter to retell biblical stories and not to have the result anticlimactic. But *Prince of Egypt* seems to be most successful. The interesting way in which the Egyptian culture and its abstract, imperialistic monotheism are harnessed to the ethical seriousness of Judaism give cogency to Moses' character. Like many a man who has advanced the cause of justice, he starts with human indignation against injustice, out of which there comes an ethical monotheism. The book reflects a fine feeling for and knowledge of early culture, and there is great restraint in resisting the temptation to make the tale too lush. *Prince of Egypt* is an excellent book and is bound to reward those who, knowing their Old Testament, will enjoy this appreciation of one of its great characters.

*The Cry and the Covenant* tells the story of a relatively unknown campaign in the progress of scientific medicine. A hundred years ago, the mortality of mothers and newly born babies was shockingly high. Lying-in wards of hospitals seemed to promise nothing except death for those who

went to them. As a result, many a mother chose rather to have her child in the street. To enter the hospital was to embrace death for both mother and child. Ignaz Semmelweiss was the impudent and insatiably curious son of a Hungarian grocer. He was a maverick who refused to listen to the advice of his superiors. In those days, it was the custom for the doctors to go directly from the morgues, where they had been dissecting cadavers or demonstrating to students, to the wards. The popularity of an obstetrician was marked by the amount of blood and pus he had on his coat. Semmelweiss discovered almost by accident the connection between the dirt and the contagion which caused child-bed fever. He tried to force cleanliness upon his assistants. But they disobeyed him, his colleagues laughed at him, his superiors denied him preferment, and the medical profession refused to recognize the truth of his statistics. Even though his record for safe deliveries and well mothers was almost perfect, while theirs was horrible in comparison, they refused to listen to him. He was called The Pesth Fool. The political ferment of Austria and Hungary was brought into alignment against him. But he fought for his convictions with courageous tenacity, even though in the end it meant his sanity and his life.

We become so used to the miracles of modern science, to which our generation is hospitable, that we forget science's early prophets who battled against insuperable odds and who made such slow gains. To Semmelweiss, the succeeding generations owe a great debt. The world had to wait for a Pasteur to prove why the mad Hungarian was right; but his own crude, inductive method revolutionized the science of obstetrics; and his courage made him one of medicine's heroes.

**The Wall.** By JOHN HERSEY. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. pp. 632. \$4.00.

**The Horse's Mouth.** By JOYCE CARY. New York: Harper & Brothers. pp. 311. \$3.00.

**The Diplomat.** By JAMES ALDRIDGE. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. pp. 631. \$3.75.

**Prince of Egypt.** By DOROTHY CLARKE WILSON. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. pp. 423. \$3.50.

**The Cry and the Covenant.** By MORTON THOMPSON. New York: Doubleday and Company. pp. 469. \$3.50.



## Book Reviews

**Promise and Fulfillment (Palestine 1917-1949).** By ARTHUR KOESTLER. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. pp. 335. \$4.00.

**Palestine Is Our Business.** By MILLAR BURROWS. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1949. pp. 155. \$2.50.

Palestine, that little strip of land of which it has been said that it has the size of a county and the problems of a continent, has in recent years occupied a very important place on the stage of world affairs. Almost everyone who has followed with more than cursory interest the dramatic events which led to the establishment of the state of Israel has become either pro- or anti-Zionist, pro- or anti-Arab. Therefore it is at present almost impossible for any writer on the Palestine problem to maintain a dispassionate view. Not only strong convictions, but also deep emotions are involved and color inevitably every interpretation of the subject at hand.

*Promise and Fulfillment* is the work of Arthur Koestler, world-famous writer of *Darkness at Noon* and other recent best-sellers, himself a modern cosmopolitan of European-Jewish background who has made several prolonged visits to Palestine during the past three decades. The book is divided into three parts. In the first, "Background," which makes up more than half of the entire volume, Koestler traces the events which led from the Balfour Declaration in 1917 to the proclamation of the state of Israel in 1948. He stresses what he calls the "psychosomatic view of history," i.e., he emphasizes the psychological factors: the deep longing of the Jews for a national home, their fear and growing insecurity as the Nazi terror lashed out at them, the sympathy of the English for the Arab way of life, their growing distaste for the Zionists. He describes in detail the vacillations of British policy. While he has sympathy for the poor Arabs, he speaks with scorn of the rich Arab landowners who led the opposition to Zionism and at the same time sold their land to the Jews at high profits; who proclaimed a Holy War and fled when the first shots were fired. Movingly he describes "the little death ships" with their human cargo to whom Palestine was the only possible escape from liquidation by the Nazis; these unseaworthy freighters, limping from port to port, their passengers dying of hunger, thirst, typhus, many becoming insane, only at last, in sight of their Promised Land, to be refused entrance and to be forced to continue their dreadful odyssey which for many of them ended in tragic death. Is it surprising that the Jews finally resorted to terrorism, and that, when the British abandoned their Mandate, the 750,000 Jews of Palestine, surrounded by forty million hostile Arabs, fought not only with an epic courage, but also with a desperate ruthlessness?

The second section, "Close-Up," partly written in the form of a diary of the author, covers the period in which the newborn state, against seemingly frightful odds, not only defended itself successfully, but almost everywhere drove the Arab armies back whence they had come.

In the third part, "Perspective," the author analyzes the political structure of Israel, basically a country of workers, most of them organized in trade unions with the real political power resting in the latter. He writes disparagingly of the rebirth of the Hebrew language, which had been practically dead for 2,000 years.



but which is now the sole official language of Israel. He suggests that the archaic and cumbersome Hebrew alphabet be latinized. With biting irony he condemns the control which at present the orthodox minority exerts over many aspects of life, and he predicts that the young native generation in a few years will trim the power of the Rabbinate by a bloodless secular revolution.

In the "Epilogue" Koestler addresses the Jews outside of Israel; he maintains that "the Jewish religion is not merely a system of faith and worship, but implies membership of a definite race and potential nation" (p. 334). Now that the nation has been established, the author suggests that Jews all over the world "must either follow the imperative of their religion, the return to the Promised Land—or recognize that that faith is no longer theirs" (p. 335), an advice which is certain to be rejected by many Jews.

This is a brilliant, informative, frequently provocative, aggressively secularistic book in which deep pathos often alternates with brittle, bitter humor.

*Palestine Is Our Business* is written by Professor Millar Burrows, distinguished theologian and Old Testament scholar, who through years of residence in the Near East is thoroughly familiar with Palestine's problems. His point of view is sympathetic to the Arabs and highly critical of Zionism. He bluntly states that "the best case that can be made for Zionism is not good enough to justify the wrong done by the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine" (p. 14). This wrong he sees primarily in the creation of a state against the will of the native people who have dwelt in the land for 1,300 years. In the chapter, "Who Is to Blame?" he attributes responsibility to all involved: the British Government, the United States, the Arabs, the Jews, and also the Christians of the world. His particular concern, however, is with the fate and future of the 700,000 Arab refugees from Israel; he demands that "all those refugees who want to return to their homes must be allowed and helped to do so" (p. 154), a request which is certain to be rejected by the Israelis who on the one hand are rather grateful for the space in their land created by the flight of these Arabs, and on the other hand fear that the returning Arabs would constitute a potential fifth column in their midst.

In view of the fact that in America the case for the Zionists is so much more widely and strongly presented than that for the Arabs, the book is useful; it certainly should help to awaken the American Christian conscience with regard to the plight of the homeless Arab refugees. However, Dr. Burrows' argument would be more convincing if he had shown a deeper understanding of the terrific psychological strain under which the Jews of the world, and especially those of Palestine, have lived during the past decades. Almost every one of them has lost loved ones under the Nazi terror; and beyond all considerations of right and wrong, of fine legal points or international agreements, they were driven by a desperate sense of obligation to keep at least one door open for those who in future years may face the threat of a fate similar to that of so many of their people, who perished by the millions in concentration camps and gas chambers.

This reviewer, too, would have preferred an Arab-Jewish Federal State in Palestine. But history has moved in another direction, and it is only fair to admit that Arabs and Christians share the responsibility with Jews for this development.

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**Literary History of the United States.** Edited by ROBERT E. SPILLER, WILLARD THORP, THOMAS H. JOHNSON, and HENRY SEIDEL CANBY. Associates: HOWARD MUMFORD JONES, DIXON WECTER, and STANLEY T. WILLIAMS. Three volumes. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948. Vols. I-II, pp. 1422. Vol. III, pp. 817. Vols. I-II, \$15; Vol. III, \$7.50; all three, \$20.

The literary history of a country is the history of its mind. If the work is well done you have a fairly complete revelation of the culture of the country. It may consist of rather barren chronicles. It may express intimate psychological sympathy with the writers and their contemporaries. It may see the literary product of a particular country against the whole background provided by the culture of the world. It may be the clever propaganda of a particular social cult or a particular intellectual group. It may see the literary product of a particular land in the light of those permanent standards which give significance to civilization and indeed to human life.

The *Literary History of the United States* is written by fifty-five authors under the supervision of four editors and three associate editors who themselves contribute chapters. Many of the authors are men of already established literary reputation, and each of the writers brings competent knowledge of some aspect of the great discussion. A symposium is rather likely to lack unity, and at the worst to be a sort of hodgepodge. But the most careful work has given to the chapters of this book an extraordinary coherence. The bad-tempered provinciality of much recent criticism is for the most part replaced by an urbane and judicial comprehensiveness which deserves very high praise. Indeed the reading of the *Literary History of the United States*, after the perusal of Vernon Louis Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought*, is a happy experience. Professor Parrington, with all his brilliancy and his air of judicial scholarship, never lets a man whose position he dislikes have a real day in court. His own presuppositions make him color blind. His work is the product of a clever, uncharted mind. The present work at least represents a notable advance in the direction of understanding and, in the best sense, objective criticism. The authors of the particular chapters really know the men about whom they write, and in some genuine sense enter their minds and come to know what life meant to them.

But the outstanding achievement of this monumental work is seen in the fashion in which American literature is seen against the background of European literature and European culture. In a happy cosmopolitan sense the authors are men of the world. No history of American literature previously written is characterized by such ample intellectual resources. The chapters themselves, in the main, are written with a clear vitality which makes the adventure of reading them one of genuine pleasure. And the more he knows of the backgrounds they discuss, the more the reader will enjoy the richness of their own quality. The third volume gives manifold bibliographical directions which will be prized by the reader who wishes to pursue the subjects discussed.

As one thinks over the two volumes which constitute the history proper, after spending more than a year in their careful and leisurely perusal, it becomes very clear that the contents of these studies ought to be in the minds of all Americans who make any pretension in respect of the intellectual life. If every preacher in the American pulpit by rereading and rereading, marking and inwardly digesting, had made his own the rich body of knowledge and understanding brought to him

by these books, we would have in quite a new sense an educated ministry. Ripeness of knowledge must lie behind ripeness of judgment. And ripeness of judgment is one of the great needs of the American pulpit. To live with our writers of every period, sensing their thoughts, sharing their experiences, and rejoicing with each as he finds the golden word or the golden phrase, is an experience of the greatest enrichment.

All this praise by no means implies that the critical reader will not have questions and judgments of his own calling for expression as he happily reads these volumes. The authors have by no means achieved a large comprehension of the permanent principles in the light of which the best work in appraisal must be done. The result is that you have good criticism rather than great criticism. The brilliant movement in literary humanism led by Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More is discussed with a good deal more understanding than seemed possible in the periods when apostles of the flux gave themselves away by bursting into profanity every time the name of Babbitt or the name of More was mentioned. But the union of literary criticism and religious thinking which eventuated in a comprehensive criticism of literature and life is quite ignored. And this is only a part of a larger situation. The treatment of such powerful religious thinkers as Reinhold Niebuhr one gladly welcomes. But the ripest Christian writing of our own period in the main is curiously ignored. And indeed it must be confessed that these monumental volumes give no adequate sense of the place of evangelical religion in the making of the American mind.

These qualifications of the words of delighted appreciation are important. But they do not change the verdict with which I think every thoughtful and well-informed reader must agree, that here we have the best, the wisest, and the most learned literary history of our country which has been published. And the nation will pronounce judgment on its own intelligence by the reception which it gives to this work.

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

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**Renewing the Mind.** By ROGER HAZELTON. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. pp. xii-192. \$2.50.

It is likely that more than one reader will eagerly snatch at Roger Hazelton's *Renewing the Mind* in the expectation that here is another book which provides the sure clue to that "peace of mind" which we all seek today. If so, the reader will be disappointed at first; because, in spite of a deceptive ease and simplicity of style, Hazelton is no glib peddler of superficial panaceas for the human spirit. However, if the reader should persist in his inquiry, he may find an unexpected reward. For this book treats of the fundamental problem of the relationship between faith and understanding; and, as it rises to its climax in the last chapter on "The Mind of Christ," it points the way to a "peace of mind" which is more securely rooted than that offered by more obviously popular works.

In the preface the author indicates that there are three ways of dealing with the relationship between faith and reason. The first is the effort to make Christianity intellectually respectable. The second is the affirmation of a fundamental and irreconcilable conflict between reason and faith. The third answer—which is

Hazelton's—recognizes "with the first that faith and reason have great need of each other and must learn to live together in the same person and the same world," and "also sees with the second that real wedges of acute tension are always being driven between the thinking-knowing and the believing-trusting levels of our experience."

The book then proceeds by developing the four theses: that faith precedes understanding; that faith needs understanding; that faith pursues understanding; and that faith achieves understanding. The unfolding of the argument is well ordered, with illuminating insights into such problems as the relationship between doubt, knowledge, trust, and faith (chap. 3); the function of paradox (pp. 137-142); the role of the religious imagination (pp. 116-123); the uses of analogy (pp. 142-147); and the relationship of truth to the person of Christ (pp. 147-152).

The general temper of the book is revealed in the author's appeal to a St. Paul who has been overlooked by contemporary theology—"the Paul who said he would rather speak one word with the understanding than many in the gibberish of tongues, the Paul who spoke of faith as a reasonable service, the Paul who prayed that the mind of Christ should be in his followers' minds" (p. 72). And again, in these words from the last chapter: "Not indignation but invitation is the right address of faith to our sick-minded time. . . . We shall never win the minds of men for Christ by frontal attack on what they stand for and heaping scorn on what they hold dear. They must be encouraged back to health by the shining of the sun of truth in our own hearts" (p. 175).

If it is proper to speak of a sermon as "heart-warming," then it is proper to speak of this book as "mind-warming." It is marked by a clarity, directness, thoughtfulness, sanity, and sweetness that are none too common in these our frantic times. The literary experience in store for the reader is a pleasant one; but the reader's intellect will have to be alert and active from the first page to the last.

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**Dogmatics in Outline.** By KARL BARTH. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949. pp. 155. \$3.75.

The perennial place of Karl Barth among contemporary Protestant theologians is universally recognized. No one can do serious theological thinking today without taking account of Barth's work. His influence may not be as great in the United States as on the Continent and in the British Isles, but it is contributing greatly here to new theological concern and depth. And that is all to the good.

For those who have found Barth's writings very difficult, this book, which consists of a discussion of the Apostles' Creed, may help toward better understanding. The book consists of lectures which the author delivered at the University of Bonn, the same university from which he was once expelled by the Nazis, during the summer semester in 1946. The lectures were given without manuscript and, as published, are based on shorthand transcripts. As a result the discussion, while hardly on a popular level, is easier to read and comprehend than many of his writings.

In my opinion the point at which Karl Barth can be of very great value to an American theologian or minister is by his radical way of stating his theological positions. He invites, nay demands, serious disputation (*Auseinandersetzung*). Illustrations might be taken from practically any chapter in the book. For example,

in speaking of the meaning of God, Barth says, "When we Christians speak of 'God,' we may and must be clear that this word signifies a priori the fundamentally Other, the fundamental deliverance from that whole world of man's seeking, conjecturing, illusion, imagining, and speculating. . . . The God of the Christian Confession is, in distinction from all gods, not a found or invented God or one at last and at the end discovered by man; he is not a fulfilment, perhaps the last, supreme and best fulfilment, of what man was in course of seeking and finding" (p. 36). Or again, of all attempts to prove the existence of God, Barth says, "What sort of attempts were they, after all, where the attempt was made to prove a perfect Being alongside imperfect ones? Or from the existence of the world to prove its ultimate and supreme cause, God? Or from the alleged order of the world to prove the ordering Power? Or the moral proof of God from the face of man's conscience? I will not enter into these 'proofs' of God. I don't know whether you can at once see the humour and the fragility of these proofs. These proofs may avail for the alleged gods; if it were my task to make you acquainted with these allegedly supreme beings, I would occupy myself with the five famous proofs of God. In the Bible there is no such argumentation; the Bible speaks of God simply as of One who needs no proof" (p. 38).

It would be of great value for any individual to sit down with these provocative statements and in the light of his own theological position ask himself: What do we really mean when we speak of God, as Barth does, as the wholly Other? Does the term "a finite God" have any real meaning? Is it true that man cannot "by searching find out God?" Are the rational processes to be discounted in religious experiences?

Or again, Barth confronts us when he discusses the article, "I believe in Jesus Christ." As Barth states it, "This is the point at which ways diverge, and the point at which is fixed the relation between theology and philosophy, and the relation between knowledge of God and knowledge of men, the relation between revelation and reason, the relation between Gospel and Law, the relation between God's truth and man's truth, the relation between outer and inner, the relation between theology and politics. At this point everything becomes clear or unclear, bright or dark. For here we are standing at the centre" (p. 66). What Barth does here is to compel us to rethink our own Christology, for here we are indeed "at the center," and yet it is the point at which the Christian pulpit most readily becomes vague and unsure. It may well be that Barth does not too well clarify his own position, but he can help us to clarify our own.

An American reading this book may well be surprised that so little is said of the Kingdom of God. Indeed, the discussion of the Kingdom is left to one paragraph at the end of his chapter, "The Church." Barth speaks of the Kingdom of God as "the aim of the church," but in doing so he apparently does not mean that it is a future toward which it is working; it is a future for which it is hoping. The church's duty is to proclaim the gospel, to say that the Kingdom is coming. The church longs for the Kingdom, but it does not bring the Kingdom. In the light of Barth's dogmatic statement about the nature of the Kingdom, what do we mean by the Kingdom? And how do we really conceive of the Kingdom's coming? Do we or do we not agree with his position that we can do nothing to bring the Kingdom? And if we can do something to bring the Kingdom, what can we do? What are our limitations and what are our possibilities?



What Barth does is that he drives us back to the Confessions, back to the great statements of the historical Christian faith, and beyond that, back to the Bible. That again raises the question of how we really think of the Bible; how we can use the Bible; in what way the Bible is for us the word of God. How can we combine a modern interpretation of the Bible with the kind of biblicism which Barth himself uses? So it seems to me that this little book can be of greatest help, not in making us all Barthians, but in helping us all to clarify our own conception of the Christian faith.

Though there are many obscure and ambiguous passages, there are many passages also which are like shafts of light. There are good, earthy phrases which the rather literal and somewhat heavy translation cannot wholly obscure. There are many statements which are made as dogmatic assertions without sufficient explanation as to the ground for those assertions. There are passages which help us to a theological understanding of some of our vexing moral problems. His judgment upon anti-Semitism as "the form of godlessness beside which, what is usually called atheism is quite innocuous" (p. 77) goes very deeply into this problem.

If it is true, as I said at the beginning, that no one can do serious theological thinking today without taking account of Karl Barth, then I would now add that in such taking account of him, this book *Dogmatics in Outline* might be a very valuable aid indeed.

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**Christianity and Civilisation. Part 2, Specific Problems.** By EMIL BRUNNER.  
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949. pp. ix-147. \$2.50.

This is Part II of Dr. Brunner's Gifford Lectures. Part I was a defense of the thesis "that only Christianity is capable of furnishing the basis of a civilisation that can be rightly described as human." It dealt with fundamental themes such as reality, truth, justice, and freedom which are common to Christianity and civilization. In this Part II, the author applies the arguments of Part I to "specific problems" which continue to bedevil our civilization. These include technics, science, social change, education, work, art, wealth, law, and power. Although Dr. Brunner deals with these matters within the limits of a single volume, and therefore without the elaboration and profundity they demand, he treats them with insight and clarity which make the book worth careful reading.

Dr. Brunner's point of view, which makes civilization subservient to freedom and dignity of man as a "person," leads him to say a great deal that is illuminating and helpful, and gives the volume its needed unity. His solutions to the problems explored, in terms of the supremacy of personal values, tend to be rather facile and hortatory, but they do provide us with standards of judgment and broad objectives. Perhaps one should not expect more from a theologian. On the other hand, one puts the book aside with the uneasy thought that if one were to set out to practice what it preaches, one would encounter difficulties hardly suggested by Dr. Brunner's analyses. What the author says about the problems of technics, science, education, wealth and power, give little indication of their tremendous perplexities for one who takes them seriously. Surely, it is not enough to suggest that technics should be "subordinate to human will, and human will [is] to the divine will" (p. 15). It is not enough to point out that scientific truth should be subservient to another truth

concerning man and God. Is it enough to say that education should develop personalities responsible toward God and their fellow men, or that there should be a new *rapprochement* between faith and art? And it certainly is not enough to argue that what capitalism needs today is less greed and more justice.

Dr. Brunner's early controversies with "liberalism," especially in theology, have won him a reputation as a merciless critic of modern civilization. He used to be known as a relentless enemy of scientism, rationalism, idealism, materialism, humanism, etc., much of which is common to Russian Communism and Western capitalistic democracies. Now Dr. Brunner is convinced that the real peril of our age is totalitarianism, especially Russian Communism. Therefore biblical faith now appears as opposed not to our civilization but to tyranny. Now our Western institutions are seen as rooted in the Christian faith, as authentic expressions of its *ethos*, and as in need of its continued influence if they are to be preserved against Communist tyranny. Dr. Brunner is now an apologist rather than a critic of our civilization. Such a change of mind is quite easy to understand. But we doubt its wisdom and its value for understanding the problems of contemporary mankind. Berdyaev and Tillich may offer us more help in this respect. God may well want from us at this time more than to increase the good among us and to set our faces against the evil of Communism. He may want, as Dr. Brunner suggests more than once, a "right-about-turn," not only inward but also outward, in the institutions which comprise our civilization. Such a probability, rather certainty, must not be minimized in our zeal against Communist tyranny. Otherwise, our civilization and the Communist may perish by the same judgment and purpose of God.

Dr. Brunner has given us a serious and stimulating study of our civilization and its problems. He would be the first to allow that much more needs to be done, and as quickly as possible.

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**The Perennial Scope of Philosophy.** By KARL JASPERS. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949. pp. 188. \$3.00.

**The Philosophy of Existence.** By GABRIEL MARCEL. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949. pp. viii-96. \$2.75.

The term "existentialism" is one of those bafflingly indefinite and convenient words which are the joy and despair of religious and philosophical thinking. It is obviously a term with a very wide range referring to a general category of thinking which can be made to include all sorts of otherwise differing points of view; and the common denominator itself has ranged from a kind of intuitive awareness that decision and action must be at the heart of all knowledge worth bothering about, to a systematic way of accounting for the unsystematic nature of all human experience.

In the history of the philosophical background to this broad, general, and diverse movement, the name of Karl Jaspers is pre-eminent. With his contemporary, Martin Heidegger, Professor Jaspers is one of the two German philosophers who have related the more theoretical aspects of the work of Søren Kierkegaard a century ago (and one related aspect of the earlier work of Kant) to the modern scene. In reflection to and also in reaction against the work of both Heidegger and Jaspers (and the two have wide differences), there have developed a whole galaxy of theo-

logical, philosophical and literary ways of dealing with experience. One such point of view is that represented by Gabriel Marcel, who has attempted to relate existentialism to the Roman Catholic tradition.

In *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, Professor Jaspers addresses himself to the role of philosophy at all times and in all circumstances, yet he has particular reference to the present. The book represents a series of six lectures given at the University of Basel in July, 1947. The lectures have been edited and prepared to present a unified treatment of their subject. The attempt to do justice to M. Marcel's thinking in combining four different essays in one volume, however, has a less happy result.

Jaspers' book is the nearest approach possible to a systematic study of the existentialist position in nonexistential categories—or the objectification of that which, to the author himself, is essentially nonobjective. If the foregoing statement were not enough of a paradox by itself, there is the added fact that throughout the volume the author shows himself to be a nonreligious theist, who is tremendously concerned about God.

The border line between religion and philosophy is admittedly tenuous. To Jaspers, that which makes religion religion is its embodiment in the life of an ongoing historical community, expressing itself in cult and myth and continually being subject to the temptation to make demonic pretensions about its possession of Truth. In the case of Jaspers himself, the border line can be understood only dialectically because while he rejects the historic religions on the above grounds, his own understanding of the operation of philosophy would seem to commit him to something analogous if it is to be more than the kind of speculative theorizing which he in common with all existentialists abhors.

Jaspers sees the primary job of philosophy as that of making possible a creative faith—man's "comprehensive" awareness of his own ambiguous and contradictory situation which includes the awareness that he himself is comprehended. "Faith proper is the existential act by which transcendence becomes conscious in its actuality" (p. 17). The contents of philosophical faith are (1) "God is," (2) "There is an absolute imperative," (3) "The world is an ephemeral stage between God and existence" (p. 30).

Jaspers' understanding of the significance of knowledge in the appraisal of man's meaning to himself shows a great kinship in sensitivity as well as in intellectual point of view with the biblical tradition, particularly the Old Testament prophets. Jeremiah is almost a patron saint. He parts company with the Christian thinkers who would walk with him thus far in describing the human problem as essentially one of finitude. Jaspers makes no allowance for what Christians know as Sin—the deliberate usurpation of the moral role of God.

To this reviewer, the partial justice in Jaspers' objection to the exclusiveness of the Jewish-Christian tradition is confused by his failure to be aware that what he rejects is essentially the way the Jewish-Christian tradition recognizes and deals with this other aspect of the human problem—the fact of Sin.

This serious qualification should make Christian thinkers aware that Jaspers is no more of their company than he thinks he is—since he is not concerned with what to Christians is a major issue confronting man. But with allowance made for this, Jaspers' understanding of the task of philosophy in these days can exert a tremendously clarifying influence upon the world's muddled thinking.

As against the systematic clarity of Jaspers' thinking, Marcel stands in a

peculiar position in both philosophical and religious thinking. As a convinced Roman Catholic, he accepts commitment to the reality of supernatural objective knowledge. As one who has been deeply concerned with the problem of the meaning of human experience, he has developed a way of looking at things primarily in terms of the existential demand to which men must respond. He attempts to reconcile these two opposed points of view by vague references to mysticism on the one hand and by a unique adaptation of the eighteenth-century approach to "natural religion" on the other.

In no place is this conflict between the medieval "realism" of traditional Roman Catholicism and the radical "criticism" of all static categories, common to all forms of existentialism, clearer than in Marcel's essay on Sartre. His profound and penetrating criticism of Sartre's confusion on the level of communication and freedom is confounded by the Roman Catholic stereotypes which the author has to drag in "by the ears." "It (existentialism) transcends itself, or tends to transcend itself, when it opens itself out to the experience of the supra-human, an experience which can hardly be ours in a genuine and lasting way this side of death, but of which the reality is attested by the mystics, and of which the possibility is warranted by any philosophy which refuses to be immured in the postulate of absolute immanence or to subscribe in advance to the denial of the beyond and of the unique and verifiable transcendence" (p. 65).

All of the four essays have their points of interest, but of the greatest critical value to this reviewer is the first—"On the Ontological Mystery," in which Marcel in more clearly consistent terms explores the nature of human hope. On the whole, this book must be regarded as a type specimen, however, rather than a useful study commanding general interest.

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**The Twentieth Century: A Mid-Way Account of the Western World.** By HANS KOHN. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. pp. ix-242. \$2.50.

One need not expect in this slender volume a full-fledged history of the first half of the twentieth century. Professor Kohn has merely attempted here to review some major political trends which have dominated public life during the past two generations. Having written prodigiously on the idea of nationalism, revolutions and dictatorships, and the world order in its historical perspective—to mention only the titles of three of his earlier volumes—he submits here these and other forces which have shaped the destinies of our period to a renewed stimulating analysis. He does not limit himself to the chronological period between 1900 and 1949, but in some cases goes back to ancient and medieval times and almost invariably refers to events and ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to throw light on some dominant trends today.

After a brief analysis of "the disintegrating forces in nineteenth-century civilization," including nationalism, the cult of force, and the loss of reverence for reason, Dr. Kohn takes up the destructive historic forces of Germany's "Prussian" ideals and Russia's messianic nationalism and analyzes in some detail the various well-known "isms" of our time. He concludes on a hopeful note, however, and believes in the combination of a revitalized democracy and world federation as strong forces of reintegration which might lead mankind out of the present impasse.

The reader will readily see that Dr. Kohn's main concern is with political movements. Not even economic developments, although admittedly basic for the understanding of political trends, are mentioned more than in passing. Some acute political observations by Thorstein Veblen are quoted, but no reference is made to his major economic theories. Still less would one expect in this context a treatment of broader social institutions or of literary, scientific, and artistic developments during the first five decades of this century.

Readers of this journal need not be surprised, therefore, to find the religious movements, too, treated only in a few casual remarks. The index has a dozen entries under "religion" but they are all incidental to the main political theme, except perhaps in connection with Russia's "permanent mission." There are two references to Karl Barth, once in connection with such an interesting observation as: "The dialectic theology or theology of crisis, the famous manifesto of which appeared characteristically in the year 1918 in Karl Barth's exegesis of the Epistle to the Romans, and the existential philosophy of a man like Martin Heidegger both start, although they arrive at opposite results, from the fear of man who is unprotected and lonely amid the dangers of life" (p. 42). But this theme is not further elaborated here or elsewhere; nor is there any mention of the ecumenical movement, the Lambeth Conferences, the Vatican policies, etc.

Nevertheless, a student of religion, too, will benefit from reading this book. It is written in a popular vein, perhaps too popular at times for the more informed general reader, but it also offers a number of brilliant remarks and fine insights as well as a selection of extraordinarily apt quotations. Some of the latter will of necessity lead to the melancholy conclusion that, although many shortcomings of our civilization have been predicted by ingenious analysts of other days, most contemporaries were not prepared to listen to such warnings, unless these happened to confirm their own opinions or else had gathered sufficient power by appealing to often unrelated biases.

**SALO W. BARON**

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**In the Beginning (Vol. II, The Book of Human Destiny).** By SOLOMON GOLDMAN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. pp. xiv-892. \$5.00.

Genesis is the subject of this volume. About fifty pages contain Selections, newly translated, another fifty-six pages deal with the Historical Background, Authorship, Style and Philosophy. "Echoes and Allusions" with indexes follow, 613 pages. Then comes a Commentary of about 100 pages.

Two main purposes appear for this book: to show that Genesis is a classic quoted widely from ancient times to the present, and to maintain its historical value. The best portion is the fresh translation of selected stories, the very appreciative essay on style, and the commentary on the meaning of words and phrases.

"Echoes and Allusions" reveal enormous research, over 1,500 references from the Bible, rabbinical literature, the Koran, Dante, Shakespeare, down to Negro spirituals and the *New York Times*. There are main headings such as "The Law of Moses," "Creation," etc., and minor ones like "Authority," "Birds," "Birth Control." The reader is left to himself to decide whether the reference is to be taken figuratively or literally; and one may question, for example, whether John Hancock, in his speech on the Boston Massacre, referring to "the laws of God



and man," meant to confine God's laws to those given in Genesis. Some other quotations also seem rather far-fetched. The indexes are complete from authors and works, anthologies and dictionaries to Miracle Plays.

Dr. Goldman's Selections are well-made and his translation is in excellent modern English. He is at home with both the Hebrew and English languages. His enthusiasm is shown when he says, "probably the most oft-quoted sayings in conversation as well as in literature have come from Genesis." In discussing Style he is certainly right in describing those sayings as "simple, pithy, sparkling and unpretentious" and the images as "vivid, picturesque and forceful" presenting "nature and man in the raw," and the characters having "a magnificent background of narration." His interpretation of the Creation stories is unique. "The second chapter is not a duplicate but a sequel to the first. Its aims cannot possibly have been that of retelling the story of creation." He says there is but one poem in Genesis, and regards "the Blessings" as prose. Four pages are spent in refuting the assertion of "many scholars" that the Flood story is "the masterpiece of the documentary theory." Because the Joseph story is a work of "a master story-teller of superb craftsmanship" and "comes near being perfect" from the standpoint of the storyteller's art, he thinks that such a writer could not have made use of the Egyptian *Tale of Two Brothers*.

Thus, notwithstanding his very valuable and brilliant portrayal of the literary values of these stories, he is at variance with modern scholarship as to the authorship, calling the documentary theory of the compilation of the Pentateuch the hypothesis of "extremists" and using recent archeological discoveries to show the probability that Abraham "set the example of writing" and Moses had a share in the composition of Genesis, "revised other documents," and "may have been the first of the redactors." He also ignores the idea that the conception of God in the Old Testament is a development, asserting that "the God of Genesis was one, universal God, of justice" and "man, made in God's image, had free-will and the control of his desires."

This volume is remarkable in its range of scholarship and creative imagination, but must be read with discrimination.

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**Sacraments, Signs and Symbols.** By W. NORMAN PITTENGER. Chicago: Wilcox & Follett Co., 1949. pp. xi-162. \$2.00.

This is an uncommonly penetrating study of external religion from the viewpoint of a Catholic of the Anglican Communion. It is intended to show primarily that Christianity, in its most salient characteristics, is a religion deeply rooted in the material side of man's existence. Man is an intricate "body-mind" complex—a fact which is revolutionizing the practice of medicine in our times. Theologians of the Catholic way of thinking have long been cognizant of the far-reaching implications of this body-mind relationship. From this Catholic viewpoint, the author discusses the significance and the implications, both social and spiritual, of the ceremonial and sacramental aspects of Christian religion.

Christianity is seen as a credal, ethical and liturgical religion. The historic Christian creeds state the essence of a faith which was and is expected to affect con-

duct without express credal prescription. Christian ethics, of necessity, must be rooted in the Christian concepts of the nature of God, man, and the world. Sacraments and liturgy are the media by which the great credal symbols are constantly and vividly presented so as to capture and bring into Christian obedience the will of the worshiper.

In recent times, there has been a remarkable revival of corporate worship in the Roman Catholic Church with strong emphasis on intelligent congregational sharing of the meaning of liturgical action. There is renewed attention to the long-neglected doctrine of the priesthood of all believers.

The Roman Catholic liturgical revival has a parallel in the Anglican Communion, and its significance for Episcopalians is set forth in this volume with clarity, great wealth of learning, and insights that enrich the literature on the subject.

In recent decades the liturgical revival in the various Catholic Communions has affected worship more or less in Protestant churches. Among Protestants, there is increasing appreciation of Holy Communion as the most ancient and basic form of Christian corporate worship. Doubtless Protestants will cling steadfastly to the purely symbolic interpretation of that great sacrament, and will remain on guard against abuses and dangers of which the author of this book seems to be well aware.

The second portion of the book contains eight interesting essays on topics related to the author's exposition of the significance of sacraments, signs, and symbols. Among these, the discussion of Christianity and sexual mores is particularly timely and valuable.

His discussion of the *Una Sancta*—the one Holy Catholic Church—and Christian unity raises hopes not likely to be fulfilled soon, if ever. Christians were not of one mind on doctrine, liturgy, or almost anything else of importance in the undivided early church. Doubtless, the prophetic and priestly temperaments will tend to go their separate ways as long as mankind remains "incurably religious."

For those interested in the external aspects of religion, this is a book to read, mark, and inwardly digest. It is an adventure toward better understanding of the deep things of religion in their relation to life and worship.

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**Theologia Germanica.** Introduction and notes by JOSEPH BERNHART. New York: Pantheon Books, 1949. pp. 240. \$2.50.

There are in this edition of the *Theologia Germanica* 109 pages of introduction, 112 pages of the text, and 14 pages of notes. What are we to make of a book that requires an introduction as long as the text of the book itself? Since the *Theologia* is hardly mentioned in the first hundred pages of the introduction, we are led right away to see that Joseph Bernhart is not concerned with an analysis of the text's content, but with its place in the long and great historical stream of theology of which it is a part. He does not put to himself the question of the devotional guide: how may this teaching be worked into our lives? He rather puts to himself the question of the theological: what are the dangers of a perverted or exaggerated mysticism?

It is curious how books on mysticism frequently attract the very people who,

by their condition, are least able to make a sound use of them. The emotionally upset and the spiritually proud seem to have a fatal affinity for such works. It is then quite in order that a sound introduction be provided for mystical manuals. It might be wished that J. Bernhart had written with the common reader a little more clearly in mind; however, it may turn out that those who are always seeking after the higher reaches of mysticism before they have profited by the practices of common piety, will be attracted to his close analysis of the matter.

Two of the greatest interpreters of mystical religion, Friedrich von Hügel and Evelyn Underhill, became in their lifetime increasingly aware of the danger of the neo-Platonic or the Oriental mystical element swamping the boat of Christian life and doctrine. Strictly speaking, there is in the Synoptic Gospels no hint of a unity of essence between God and man. Jesus felt himself unified to the Father, but he also knew the sense of separation; and the unity described in the Gospels is that of two distinct personalities coming willfully, freely together. Christian unity is a unity of personality, of will through charity; it does not obliterate the human element nor leave symbols and senses clean behind.

Joseph Bernhart implies that the *Theologia Germanica* runs a safe middle course, though he seems at times almost to damn it by association with heretical mystical writings. At any rate, the *Theologia Germanica* has endeared itself to the hearts of countless seekers for centuries and will continue to do so in the future. We are therefore grateful for a new, much-needed edition and are particularly grateful to Pantheon for such an attractive printing and designing accomplishment.

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**Quaker Education in Theory and Practice.** By HOWARD H. BRINTON. Wallingford, Pa.: Pendle Hill, 1949. pp. viii-114. \$1.00.

**The Quaker Story.** By SIDNEY LUCAS. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949 (in association with Pendle Hill). pp. 144. \$1.75.

"There is a vast difference between preparing to meet college entrance requirements and preparing for the Kingdom of Heaven." (p. 10.)

When Howard Brinton explains the purposes of Quaker education, he defines them only through the understanding of the nature of Quakerism itself. The doctrines of the Society of Friends center on the human-tuned awareness to the Inward Light. Secondary to this is the group meeting for worship and the meeting for business, with the resultant "outreaching social implications of the type of community life expressed through these meetings." That certain social testimonies evolve out of the practice and form of the meetings is natural. The four inter-relating testimonies he selects as exemplified in a Friends' Meeting are community, harmony, equality, and simplicity. These testimonies, once espoused, affect the Quaker school and home.

In the chapter, "Outline History of Quaker Education," we get a glimpse of the concern, the widespread urgency felt by early Friends in both England and America for the rearing of their youth in the tenets of their Society. In the last century the change of emphasis and its effect on Friends' schools is shown. The Protestant reader will be able to supply examples of this same shift in his denomination.

Current enrollment figures for Friends' schools are given as well as a brief

account of the colleges and adult schools. (Howard Brinton is the beloved director of Pendle Hill, the most recently founded adult school.)

The last chapter, "The Direction of Further Developments," says "that further development in Quaker education insofar as it is distinctly Quaker will probably result, not from discovery of a new philosophy of education but from new ways of applying the old philosophy. Where it has failed, its failure is not so much with the schools as with the Society of Friends." (p. 90) "The school must again become a training ground for a specialized community which lives according to a way different from that of the world around it, but itself serving as a goal or model to indicate the direction of advance." (p. 90) In closing, "Quaker education need not change its old objectives. It need seek only a higher measure in its achievement." (p. 109)

*The Quaker Story*, C. E. M. Joad says in the Foreword, is a "sketch of the history and organization of the Quaker movement, with some account of the doctrines propounded in the past and maintained in the present" . . . it is the tale of "liberty-loving and authority-distrusting men." "The Quakers have never forgotten the truth that what matters is not states or churches or . . . organizations, . . . or sacred doctrines and historic missions, but individual men and women, immortal souls."

This competent and short history of Quakerism helps to explain how "meetings" have become worship services without music, written prayers, sermons, or collections; how Friends can conduct their church affairs in the modern world without paid clergy, and administer relief with volunteer workers. Historically, it gives a vivid picture of George Fox standing in Yorkshire on Pendle Hill in 1652 and having a vision of a "gathered society of religious friends." We see the persistence of the early Friends, both men and women, adhering to their beliefs in spite of persecution and prison. The spread of the society, its settlement, its reaction to the evangelical movement and the recent emphasis on constructive social change are discussed.

The Advices and Queries used for the guidance of members are printed at the end along with a bibliography useful for those seeking fuller treatment of the subject. The final paragraphs summarize the book in these words:

"Not theory but reality in religion is the Quaker message. One Christian standard of truth and conduct in all things leads to simplicity of life, integrity of purpose, and a concern to right social wrongs. The Quaker message for today is one of hope; of more abundant life through liberation from prejudice; of personal spiritual development in the way of God; of simplicity, truthfulness, and friendliness."

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**Frustration: the Study of Behavior Without a Goal.** By NORMAN R. F. MAIER. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1949. pp. xiii-264. \$3.50.

There has been a growing tendency for the major American universities to turn to animal experimentation, both for teaching the principles of psychology and for further elaboration of the principles of human behavior. Columbia University, for instance, has recently revised its curriculum to make the introductory course a one-year course, with weekly laboratory sessions in which the students experiment with rats. In their Abnormal Psychology course they again use rats—producing neurotic behavior in these subjects—instead of studying cases of mental illness from the medical records.

Since Thurstone's classical experiments of the cats in the problem box, and Köhler's study of apes, there has been a growing elaboration of techniques for dealing with animals. K. S. Lashley and Norman R. F. Maier have been in the forefront of this work. Lashley's big contribution has come from the elaboration of the use of surgical techniques in the study of animals. Maier, on the other hand, has shown great ingenuity in developing problem situations with which to confront his subjects. Over the last twenty years he has published many monographs and journal articles on specific phases of this experimentation. Now he brings it all together in a unified study, a study directly oriented toward the interpretation of human behavior. His experimentation has revealed forms of behavior peculiarly like much human behavior and has shown how this behavior is produced.

Clergymen should be particularly interested in the study of stereotyped and fixated behavior resulting from the necessity of acting in unsolvable problem situations. The question will be particularly pertinent as to whether obsession with exact forms of liturgy may not really be Maier's stereotyped or fixated behavior resulting from such frustrating situations.

Part I, "Experimental and Theoretical Considerations," and, in particular, Chapter II, "Experimental Evidence of Abnormal Behavior Fixations," may be hard going for the nonpsychological reader, but if read slowly and carefully should be clear to anyone of ordinary college training. Part II: "Implications and Applications of the Theory of Frustration," and especially the concluding chapter on "Counseling and Therapy," will be of especial value to clergymen interested (as who isn't?) in improving counseling concepts and techniques.

Basically, Maier's contribution amounts to drawing a distinction between "motivated" behavior and "frustrated" behavior. The first of these is purposeful and oriented toward a goal. The second he calls "behavior without a goal." The distinction will not be easily observable in ordinary situations, but will be crucial for counseling when it can be made. The second, he finds, is approachable only by the Rogers "nondirective" techniques.

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**Forgotten Religions: A Symposium.** Edited by VERGILIUS FERM. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1950. pp. xv-392. \$7.50.

The editor of this volume, Vergilius Ferm, head of the Department of Philosophy at The College of Wooster, Ohio, is the well-established editor of such works as *An Encyclopedia of Religion* and *Religion in the Twentieth Century*. In this third compilation, he is equally successful in exhibiting the co-ordinating faculties of an editor. His Preface sets the tenor of the volume in these words: "If we believe in a Spirit at the heart of things, brooding upon the sons of men, we must seek to find evidences of that Spirit expressing itself even in cultures now so strange to us. The men of yesterday belong to the same family of humanity as we." He has brought together a group of specialists in the field of the history of religions, each well schooled in the particular "forgotten religion" upon which he (or she) writes. His biographical sketches of each of his seventeen collaborators is done with interesting brevity, yet well balanced so that the qualifications of these writers—some of them strangers because of their specialized fields—become well known. Each chapter is followed by a suggestive bibliography. Fourteen pages of index make topical and proper-name references easy. The book is excellent in format and print.



Two kinds of "forgotten religions" appear in this volume: (1) Religions such as those of ancient Egypt, Sumeria, Assyria-Babylonia, Canaan, the Hittites, prehistoric Greece, and the mystery religions of Greece which are no longer *living* religions, hence forgotten. (2) Religions like those of the Australian aborigines, the Eskimos, the Navaho Indians, the Hopi Indians, and Tibet, which are still existing, yet little known by most people. They are, in other words, "forgotten" because most of us never knew them. Other religions in this volume, which can be classified under either of these two headings, are those of Mithraism, Manichaeism, Mazdakism, Norse, South American Indians, and Shamanism. Contributors to the symposium include Li-An-che ("Tibetan Religion"), Phyllis Ackerman ("The Dawn of Religions"), Theodor H. Gaster ("The Religion of the Canaanites"), Irach J. S. Taraporewala ("Mithraism," "Manichaeism," and "Mazdakism"), Mircea Eliade ("Shamanism"), Samuel N. Kramer ("Sumerian Religion"), George Emmanuel Mylonas ("Religion in Prehistoric Greece," "Mystery Religions of Greece"). Ten other equally qualified scholars contribute chapters to the volume.

This book should make an excellent text for both study and ready reference. Most books written today on world religions deal with those religions which are still vital for devotees: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, Shinto. This symposium on "forgotten religions" will act as a helpful supplement to show wherein the roots of living religions began, and how in the present world, where cultures have been little affected by the momentum of activism, primitive ideas still exist. Especially does this volume drive home the point that religious ideas are developed and refined, made more profound and coherent as the cultural scene, in which man lives socially, grows amidst the perplexing, complex problems cast upon it.

There is a real need for this book. It assembles much fine data from the past and the present into one accessible volume. It will find a needed place on library reference shelves.

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### **History of Methodist Missions. Part One: Early American Methodism.**

**Volume One: Missionary Motivation and Expansion.** By WADE CRAWFORD BARCLAY. New York: The Board of Missions and Church Extension of The Methodist Church, 1949. pp. 449. \$3.50.

"Long overdue," said Dr. Ralph E. Diffendorfer five years ago in discussing the need for a comprehensive history of Methodist missions. Volume One of the work which he at that time proposed has now been published. In it Dr. Wade Crawford Barclay has set a very high standard of achievement for the complete set of six volumes. *Missionary Motivation and Expansion* is not only intensely interesting and inspiring, but also highly informative and authentic. It is sometimes said that history is "dry." But readers of the book here under review will discover before they have turned a dozen pages that the foregoing generalization does not apply in this instance.

Methodism is nothing if not missionary. Says the author in the concluding paragraph of his "Introduction": "The missionary character of the Methodist Movement was a natural and almost inevitable outgrowth of its fundamental doctrine of universal redemption. Its basic drives were such as made for world evangelization.

The form of organization of the societies—their primary emphasis upon fellowship, the absence of rigid dogmatic requirements, and their simplicity of organization admirably adapted the Movement to the work of missionary propagation. Because of its spirit and genius, the substance and power of its convictions and the form and method of its organization, Methodism was early destined to become what is considered by many to be the mightiest missionary movement of modern times.”

As an interpretative background for the *History of Methodist Missions*, Dr. Barclay in the chapter “The Wesleyan Heritage” has made John Wesley live again. The author has also shown in clear-cut fashion just what primitive Methodism “stood for” in doctrine, organization, and polity. Nowhere in all the annals of Wesleyan beginnings, so far as we are aware, could there be discovered twenty-six pages of more instructive and illuminating material than is furnished in the fascinating Introduction to this book.

The reader of *Missionary Motivation and Expansion* will find it more captivating and far more profitable than an evening with television, for there is colorful drama and lively action in every chapter of this story of early Methodist pioneering in America. The book is more than the history of a religious movement, for it throws a flood of light upon the secular development of the society in which Methodism took root and grew. The author deals vividly with that early period of Coke and Asbury and their fellow itinerants, the beginnings of the expansion of the Movement and the “Christmas Conference” of 1784. He gives a well-documented account in “Sowers Went Abroad to Sow” of missions in Nova Scotia, Upper and Lower Canada, and to the Indians, and tells how the Missionary Society was organized. In discussing the period, 1820 to 1844, Dr. Barclay recounts the development of the church in various regions of the United States and the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church. There is also a section on the growth of “domestic missions” including “Conference Missions,” “Missions to Negroes,” and “Foreign Language Missions.” In the concluding chapter the author addresses himself to the subject of “Missionary Organization and Program” for those same twenty-four years, during which the Society grew and gained direction for its world task. It was during these nearly two and a half decades that groups of women were organized as auxiliaries to the Society, and work in Liberia and South America was begun. The book closes with a section on “A House Divided,” the momentous separation within Methodism in the fateful year of 1844.

Methodists claim that Wesleyanism was essentially a “back-to-primitive-Christianity” movement. Certainly the circuit riders of the early days in America were, like Jesus himself, realistic idealists. They endured all the hardships of swamps and turbulent streams, of unspeakable weariness and raging fevers, of hunger and sleeplessness to proclaim their timeless message of salvation. “I am hawking blood” was the tragic entry in Asbury’s Journal on one of his last itineraries. “Be not conformed—be ye transformed” was the perennial message of these tireless pioneers for Christ. Dr. Barclay’s unforgettable descriptions of the early Methodist preachers and their experiences cannot fail to stir the emotions and strike the consciences of those of their successors who have either joined the compromisers or have “turned soft” in a life of ease and formal professionalism. We need to remember that there are today new and formidable frontiers whose conquest insistently calls for the devotion, courage, and endurance of the fathers. A “cloud of witnesses” are watching us.

Methodism may be “the mightiest missionary movement of modern times,” but those who are on the inside know in the face of the needs of these critical times so

filled with tragedies and the threat of one great and final tragedy for all civilization, that the Church must double and redouble its effort for world evangelization. Christ is now the only hope. But how shall we reawaken "the people called Methodists" to their responsibilities in the present situation? They need inspiration from the past, information on contemporary conditions, and a missionary passion which shall take hold by faith upon the future. The Board of Missions and Church Extension, which has published this book, could well afford to spend \$50,000 during the next six months in advertising and promoting the sale of *Missionary Motivation and Expansion*. Such a venture in grand strategy might result in the development of a Church more "missionary minded" than ever before in all its long history. This book should find a place on every Methodist minister's desk, and on the table of every church-school officer and teacher.

LEWIS O. HARTMAN

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**Albert Einstein: Philosopher-Scientist.** Edited by PAUL ARTHUR SCHILPP. The Library of Living Philosophers, Inc., Evanston, Illinois, 1949. pp. xvi-781 (with frontispiece and facsimile of Einstein's handwriting). \$8.50.

A desk clerk watched a guest register, and then asked him what his name was. When the latter pointed to the signature he had just written, the clerk said, "I know; that was what aroused my curiosity." Similarly we often read the writings of philosophers with the wish that we could ask them questions about their recorded opinions. To meet this need, a wealth of material appears in print amplifying the philosophical position of every philosopher of note, but unfortunately in most cases too late for the philosopher himself to comment on the accuracy of these interpretations of his views.

Volume Seven of the *Library of Living Philosophers* is a notable exception because it not only contains comments of writers, all well known in their fields, on various phases of Einstein's physical theories and philosophy, but also Einstein's reactions to these comments. Better yet, the volume starts with Einstein's autobiography or, as he humorously puts it, a necrology portraying the important events in his own intellectual development as he now evaluates them. This is in German, but is accompanied by an excellent translation by Dr. Schilpp, the editor of the volume.

The description and critical essays on the work of Albert Einstein are written by Arnold Sommerfeld, Louis de Broglie, Ilse Rosenthal Schneider, Wolfgang Pauli, Max Born, Walter Heitler, Niels Bohr, Henry Margenau, Philipp Frank, Hans Reichenbach, Howard P. Robertson, Percy W. Bridgman, Victor F. Lenzen, F. S. C. Northrop, E. A. Milne, Georges Lemaitre, Karl Menger, Leopold Infeld, Max von Laue, Herbert Dingle, Kurt Godel, Gaston Bachelard, Aloys Wenzl, Andrew Paul Ushenko, and Virgil Hinshaw, Jr.—a brilliant constellation of physicists and philosophers. These pay tribute to, criticize, and discuss just about every phase of Einstein's thought, including mathematical, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of his work.

The volume also contains a 64-page bibliography of Einstein's writings, interviews, letters, and speeches, compiled by Margaret C. Shields of Princeton University Library, and an excellent 20-page index.

The generalization of Einstein's theory of gravitation to include electromagnetic theory, which received so much publicity last December, is discussed briefly on pages

goff. of this volume. It consists essentially of replacing his metric fundamental tensor, which had hitherto been symmetric, by a nonsymmetrical tensor which is the sum of symmetric and antisymmetric parts. The symmetric terms are needed for gravitational theory and the antisymmetric for electromagnetic theory. Although Eddington had previously made the same suggestion, nevertheless, such is Einstein's great prestige, that the scientific world felt a sense of relief when this unifying conception also came from the master.

Margenau points out, and Einstein agrees in his "reply to criticisms," that Einstein's philosophical position cannot be labeled by any one of the current names of philosophical attitudes; it contains features of rationalism and extreme empiricism but not in logical isolation.

Einstein thinks of sense-impressions as conditioned by an "objective" and by a "subjective" factor. He agrees that there is no logical-philosophical justification for this conceptual distinction, but says that if we reject it we not only cannot escape solipsism, but we shall find every kind of physical thinking without basis.

To Einstein, reality means physical reality, although he does not actually attempt a definition of the word. However, he does tell why he considers questions concerning the "nature of the real" empty, by quoting (with approval) Kant: "The real is not given to us, but put to us by way of a riddle." In most respects Einstein differs from Kant; for example, in regard to the "categories" he says they are not unalterable but, rather, free conventions.

Einstein does not see eye to eye with many authorities on quantum mechanics, and this divergence is the occasion for many pages of this volume. Although this reviewer is forced to take sides against Einstein in this respect and thus arrives at a decidedly different philosophical position (idealistic), nevertheless he is constrained to join the host of Einstein's admirers not only because of his pioneer work in several fundamental branches of physics, but also because of his great influence in the struggle for world peace.

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**Child of Destiny: The Life Story of the First Woman Doctor.** By ISHBEL ROSS. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. pp. 309. \$3.50.

The *New York Times* of March 21, 1950, tells of the end of a remarkable family of pioneering women. The first woman to be ordained a minister in the United States was Antoinette Brown Blackwell, a graduate of the theological college at Oberlin in 1850, at first not licensed to preach on account of her sex, but later regularly ordained at the Congregational Church in Butler, N. Y., in 1853. A near relative was Elizabeth Blackwell, the subject of this fascinating biography recently written by Ishbel Ross, a woman of Scottish descent, who undoubtedly had in herself some of the traits of the woman she has described so admirably. Many books have been written about the courage of this entire group of women, so unmistakably, all of them, Children of Destiny.

At a memorial service held in the New York Academy of Medicine on January 25, 1911, many tributes were paid to Elizabeth Blackwell. One of them was given by that eminent physician, Dr. Abraham Jacobi, who commented that Elizabeth had evidently taken up medicine from sheer moral zeal and a passion for overcoming obstacles. She herself remarked that the idea of winning a doctor's degree gradually

assumed for her the aspect of a great moral struggle, "and the moral fight possessed an immense attraction for me."

At the same gathering, Dr. William H. Welch, the pioneer dean of the Johns Hopkins Medical School, a school which was then only eighteen years old, said, "Whenever the history of women in medicine is written, it will begin with the name of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, and the year made memorable will be the year 1849, when she received her degree of doctor of medicine. Elizabeth was not only the pioneer but, with her sister, also the leader for over fifty years in this very important movement."

The story of Elizabeth Blackwell's being finally admitted to any medical school at all is remarkable. She had tried over a couple of dozen schools and been rejected for admission. In October, 1849, "the golden apple fell" and she received word from Geneva College in New York State that she might come. It appears that, soon after college opened that October, the dean of the school walked into the medical department and read a letter that suggested the possible worthiness of Elizabeth Blackwell as a candidate. The matter was brought before a student assembly, the faculty being sure "the class would vote unanimously on the negative side, thus saving them the onus of banging the doors in the face of the enterprising applicant. But Dr. Lee misjudged the students. When he left the room . . . the absurdity of the situation gripped the students and a perfect babel of talk, laughter, and cat-calls followed. . . . A meeting was called for that evening to settle the issue. When the question was put to a vote, all the students but one jumped up and voted 'Aye!'"

A new era had begun in the classrooms of medicine. But more than that; the courage of Elizabeth Blackwell, which resulted fifty years later in naming the first dormitory for women at Hobart College "Blackwell House," was what gave the impulse to the whole enterprise of women medical missionaries throughout the world. At the very beginning of 1870, Dr. Clara Swain reached India and began the first hospital for women anywhere in the Orient. Bearing the name of Clara Swain, it has become a center of light and healing for India and the world.

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**The Hymnal 1940 Companion.** Prepared by the Joint Committee on Revision of the Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A. New York: The Church Pension Fund, 1949. pp. xxviii-732.

When *The Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America 1940* appeared, it was eagerly studied by hymnologists and hymn lovers generally, some with enthusiasm and others with doubt and questioning. To an extent not hitherto attempted in this country, a large number of plainsong melodies were included. Together with some other elements, this caused the criticism to be made that the book was not only too "highbrow" for general congregational use but was definitely pro-Catholic. The influence of Canon Winfred Douglas, very "high church," dominated the able Commission which compiled *The Hymnal*, so this was to be expected—though hardly to the extent to which it was carried. The Episcopalians have consistently set their best minds to the task of compiling their hymnals, and this Commission was no exception to that rule. As a result they have always been leaders in the hymnological field; their contributions have been noteworthy.



Now, in 1949, this *Companion* has appeared, which is something more than its name implies. In the Introduction there is a short "History of Hymnody" (general), a "Chronological List of Hymns and Tunes," and an account of the development of *The Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U. S. A.* which is excellent. Part I follows with "Historical Essays on Texts and Tunes," which has something to say concerning each of the 741 numbers in the hymnal, as well as many highly illuminating paragraphs on incidental and related subjects. Part II contains the usual "Biographies of Authors, Composers, Translators, and Arrangers," and the Indexes.

There are six Indexes, one of which, "IV. Melodic Index," is a table which "offers a means of identifying any desired tune in *The Hymnal 1940*." The intent was laudable; the result highly questionable. A means of easily identifying tunes without having to print them in score would be welcome, but this is not one. In contrast, a very valuable section of the book is "Index I: Organ Works Based on Tunes in *The Hymnal 1940*," compiled by Berniece Fee Monzingo, assistant to Van Denman Thompson, DePauw University. It is the result of many years of laborious research, and should be welcomed with loud acclaim by all organists.

To say *The Companion* is a scholarly work is not enough; it is a source work of the first rank. As is stated in the Preface, the Reverend Arthur Farlander "surveyed the secondary sources and prepared the basic manuscript," but for five years the Reverend Dr. Leonard Ellinwood, of the Library of Congress, with the assistance of Mrs. Winfred Douglas and his research staff, searched diligently for original sources. The result of their meticulous work is evident in the book. While much of the information given may not have any great appeal to the layman, it is presented in a manner which flows along nicely and reads easily. The lay reader will probably care little for the many texts in their original Latin and German, the Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac lines, or that the *Domine, refugium*, "in the Benedictine use, . . . is read at Lauds on Thursdays." But he should be interested in the many short essays having to do with carols, the office hymns of the medieval Church, sequences, Reformation psalmody, and such. They are interesting and enlightening.

As is always the case in gathering material for such a difficult project as this, a certain number of errors creep in. For instance, "Pleading Saviour," the tune used as the setting for the hymn beginning "Sing of Mary, sing of Jesus," was not first published in the *Plymouth Collection*, 1855, as is stated. The writer of this review has in his possession at least two other books showing it was published much earlier. And there are certain statements made which musicians will question; such as that on page 12 to the effect that the tunes "Coronation" or "Miles Lane" settings for "All hail the power of Jesus' name," and "Christmas," to "Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve" are "fuguing tunes" such as were "popular in England and America during the late 18th and early 19th centuries." It would require a vivid imagination to see in them anything other than strong melodies adequately harmonized.

But lest this reviewer be thought captious and caviling, let him hasten to say that this is probably the most carefully compiled and meticulously edited book of its kind to be issued to date in this country. It is a fine work and should be, and is, commended.

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**Handbook to the Mennonite Hymnary.** By LESTER HOSTETLER. Newton, Kansas: General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America, 1949. pp. xxxix-425. \$3.00.

The Mennonite Hymnary, issued in 1940 by the Board of Publications of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church, is an excellent hymnal. The publication this year by the same publishing firm of the *Handbook to the Mennonite Hymnary*, by the Rev. Lester Hostetler, B.D., emphasizes this fact.

The division of the hymnal into seven books is somewhat unusual and very effective. In particular, this arrangement provides in Book IV for an unusually complete group of sixty-nine chorales, arranged in the order of the church year. Book V brings forward a group of twenty-five carefully chosen metrical psalms. This is of particular interest as the observance of the three-hundredth anniversary of the Scottish Psalter approaches.

The author applies himself to the preparation of a Handbook to the Hymnary with evident love and pride. He served as co-editor of the hymnal together with Dr. Walter H. Hohmann. In his preface he states his purpose as that of seeking "to explain, as far as possible, the origin of the words and music of every hymn in the Hymnary."

In an introduction, remarkable at once for scope and conciseness, the author discusses such subjects as the following: (1) definition of a hymn; (2) the beginnings of Christian song; (3) the historical development of the hymn from the hymns of the Eastern Church to modern gospel songs. The introduction concludes with historical notes on Mennonite hymnody, a brief, but accurate statement concerning meters in hymn tunes, and John Wesley's famous Rules for Singing.

The introductory material constitutes a brief and elementary but effective introduction to hymnology which will prove interesting and valuable to ministers and religious educators of every denominational affiliation.

The commentary on the hymns is presented in a form which has become generally familiar. One by one, under the numbers which they bear in the hymnal itself, the hymns are discussed. In order to keep the size of the volume within bounds, the hymns are not reprinted in the handbook, but are referred to by the indexed first line. Following this, comment is made on the hymn and then, following a familiar plan in recent volumes of similar type, the musical setting or tune is discussed. When more than one hymn by the same author is included in the hymnal, the complete biographical discussion of the author is presented in connection with the first hymn bearing his name.

In similar fashion, the commentary on a tune which is used more than once is presented the first time the tune is discussed, and references are then made to this statement in connection with each recurrent use of the tune.

By a process of repeatedly "dipping into" the Handbook, this reviewer is impressed that the author has carefully and systematically sought out interesting and historically accurate facts, and generally has phrased them in brief and intelligible statements.

On more than one occasion, there is gratifying evidence of self-disciplined care to present accurate information when sentimental and "tear-jerking" stories, some of them well known because of repeated pulpit presentation, are summarily dismissed with a statement that it is "legendary," or that it is "a good story with one defect, viz., that it isn't true." On the other hand, one may quarrel with the amount of attention and space given some of the less important hymns.

The treatment of Book IV, "The Christian Year in Chorales," involving the presentation of many of the chorales in the original German, is of rare quality and interest and will appeal to thoughtful religious leaders as well as hymnologists.

The commentary on Book V, "The Metrical Psalms," taken together with division number eight of the introduction, "Psalm Versions," is of such interest as to give additional support to the suggestion that this *Handbook to the Mennonite Hymnary* may well be used as collateral reading in the study of hymnology in seminaries, colleges, and schools; and it will prove a great aid to ministers and leaders of sacred music in evangelical churches of every denomination.

EARL E. HARPER

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**Four Centuries of Scottish Psalmody.** By MILLAR PATRICK. New York: The Oxford University Press, 1950. pp. xxiii-234. \$3.00.

This well-written and informing volume appears in connection with the celebration of the three-hundredth anniversary of The Scottish Psalter, published May 1, 1650.

As the author indicates, the pedigree of the praise book is quite extensive. Versions of Psalms, mainly by Luther, appeared in Germany soon after the beginning of the Reformation; in France by Marot, a poet of high merit. In England the work of Sternhold and Hopkins was completed in 1562. A century later came the famous versification by Francis Rous. King James I wrestled with King David's compositions, but the results were not edifying.

In Scotland many attempts were made to versify the Psalms, leading up to the Psalter of 1564, the first to be authorized by the General Assembly, in which John Knox exercised dominant influence. In this version appeared "Old Hundredth," by William Kethe.

The Great Scottish Psalter of 1635 is distinguished for its development of church music, due largely to the genius of Edward Millar. It contains tunes drawn from French melodies, German chorales, and other sources, along with many of Scotch origin.

Into the Scottish Psalter of 1650 were poured the choicest treasures of preceding versions. Its supervision and revision were referred to the Westminster Assembly of Divines in 1643, with instruction originally to print for general use the Rous version. But with Committee revisions by the Assembly, by the Kirk of Scotland, by both Houses of Parliament, by the Scottish Presbyteries, with "revisions by revisions," there was comparatively little left of the compositions of Francis Rous, though for a long while his name was associated with the publication. The *Scottish Psalter* came into use on May 1, 1650, with the title: *The Psalms of David in meeter: Newly translated, and diligently compared with the originall Text, and former translations: More plaine, smooth and agreeable to the Text, than any heretofore.*

One hundred thirty-seven of the 150 Psalms were in Common meter. The author gives generous credit to Dr. W. P. Rorison, *The Story of the Scottish Psalter*, for his "incredible patience and particularity" in comparing the 1650 version with ten others, tracing the lines to their source. According to Dr. Rorison there are 8,620 lines in the Scottish Psalter, 4,846 of which are traced to other versions, Westminster (1647), having 1,588, Rous (1646), 878. The Twenty-third Psalm is a complete composite of lines from seven versions, only one of which, "He makes me down to lie," is from Rous.

There were no tunes accompanying the first edition. Twelve appeared in the Aberdeen edition of 1666. Three of them, "Dundee," "Martyrs," "Elgin," have place in *The Cotter's Saturday Night*. "Elgin" is described by Burns as "The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays."

It is not improper to claim The Scottish Psalter as a classic along with the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. It entered into the very life of the Scottish people, and profoundly influenced their thought and action. It preceded the Killing Time by eighteen years, and kindled unquenchable faith and unconquerable stamina in the hearts of the heroic Covenanters, 18,000 of them martyred from 1661 to 1688. Still the Psalter holds its place, unmatched as a revelation and expression of the spirit of the Psalms.

*Four Centuries of Scottish Psalmody* is a "must" book for those who desire fresh information concerning the development of Scottish praise, and who wish to participate in the anniversary celebrations of 1950. Commemorative meetings are being held extensively in Great Britain and in the United States and Canada.

It is no wonder that the songs of the Scottish Psalter are loved and revered. For, as Dr. Patrick says, "They are stained with the blood of the martyrs, who counted not their lives dear to them that by suffering and sacrifice they might keep faith with conscience and save the country's liberties from defeat."

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**When the Lamp Flickers.** By LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. pp. 206. \$2.50.

Effective preaching varies widely in form and approach, as between Britain and America. The present book is an excellent example of British preaching at the highest level. Digging for the deeper meanings of Scripture, and tying these in with difficult life experiences, so that the teachings of the one may be the guide to mastery of the other, the author presents us here with perhaps the most mature of his many works.

As to origin, these sermon-essays were presented as Sunday evening messages in City Temple, London, where Dr. Weatherhead has ministered for many years. Each one of them is an answer to some question presented by members of his congregations. The author has developed a type of evening service that combines deep religiousness, honest and searching inquiry for truth, and sufficient social contact to make such presentations as these informal but effective.

As to form, the twenty-one chapters are attempts to answer specific questions, and each question forms the title of a chapter. Taking their root in the teachings of Jesus, the answers come to grips with life here and now. They deal with the most pertinent social and personal issues. Did Jesus Believe in Chance? Can a Christian Be a Communist? What Is God's Plan for the Family? Did Jesus Believe in an Endless Hell? Not one of the chapters deals with a trivial issue. All are handled forthrightly and honestly. All plumb the depths of religious need and resources.

The literary style of this book makes reading it a pleasure from that standpoint, too. One can say nothing better than that here is Weatherhead at his best. Sometimes his sentences have the brevity and power of epigrams. "Power is the ability to fulfill purpose." "A chance happening is one that God did not intend and man could not foresee." "Money makes you afraid you'll lose it." "Christ beckons to

us from the future. He does not merely wave to us from the past." Again, there are sentences that make a paragraph. But, even so, such is the clarity of style that the long sentences do not seem involved, and one need never get lost.

Generous use is made of the best results of biblical scholarship. Weatherhead is an avowed liberal, and a Free Church leader who was bound to have complete freedom. The "tough-minded" will find here delightful mental stimulus. Those unwilling to walk the way of true and scholarly but devout liberalism will likely be made unhappy by the author's absolute frankness and honesty in rejecting much in religious thinking that may best be referred to as "pious cant." But all should be stimulated by the power of these messages from one of the greatest preachers of our time.

Historic City Temple, the spiritual forum of many great preachers, stands now a skeleton in High Holborn, London. This reviewer has stood amidst its ruins, and remembered its former structure. He joins with many in mourning this one of the results of the blitz. During these trying years, however, its distinguished author-pastor has preached in several places. But he never loses his congregation. The recent announcement that plans do not contemplate rebuilding the Temple would bring sadness, except for the assurance that London's most powerful and popular nonconformist preacher will carry on. In Kings Weigh House, latterly made famous by Dr. W. E. Orchard, will be found a fitting place for Weatherhead to preach. We predict that the feet of the city will turn that way, as they have to their profit to High Holburn. Let us hope that it will not be long before we have another such book as *When the Lamp Flickers*.

JAMES BRETT KENNA

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**Freedom and Faith.** By SAMUEL M. SHOEMAKER. New York: The Fleming H. Revell Company, 1949. pp. 125. \$1.75.

In twenty-seven short but terse chapters the author would remind his readers that here in America we enjoy freedom in a way that very few nations are privileged to enjoy it; that this freedom is ours because the foundation for it is laid in Christianity. He vividly declares that this freedom we enjoy and desire to keep is threatened, and if it is to be preserved, certain conditions will have to be met. He says rightly, in his introduction, "Faith alone gives men courage to throw off slavery, and faith alone gives them the self-control to use freedom aright."

This little book is chock-full of positive statements of a living, dynamic faith—a faith that is alive to the needs of our time, with the expressed conviction that through it and in the application of Christian ideals we can, and will, be sustained.

Here in America we are constantly saying that we desire the results of liberty and peace. Dr. Shoemaker reminds us that if we want the Christian results of liberty and peace we must cultivate the Christian cause of faith and righteousness.

The author does not, in any way, minimize the dangers that we are confronted with in Communism; he bluntly points out the threat of Communism without and within and the threat of a rising statism in our own nation, but he is positive and very, very helpful in his presentation of a saving faith.

I like the subtitle of the book, "America's Choice: Christ or Tyranny."

JOHN W. RUSTIN

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**Mr. Jones, Meet the Master.** By PETER MARSHALL. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1949. pp. 192. \$2.50.

**Contemporary Thinking About Paul: An Anthology.** Compiled by THOMAS A. KEPLER. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950. pp. 442. \$4.00.

Peter Marshall, erstwhile Chaplain of the United States Senate, died suddenly last year at forty-six, and "Washington, D. C., had not been so severely shaken since the passing of Franklin D. Roosevelt." Many of his Senate prayers have been published and quoted with delight for their pointedness, humor, and sincerity. People waited in line for hours each Sunday to hear him preach; he had the gifts of a poet and an actor. It was felt, therefore, that in spite of his own reluctance while alive to publish his sermons, such a book as *Mr. Jones, Meet the Master* would be greatly appreciated. It contains twelve sermons, interspersed with his prayers. The sermons are arranged as in his manuscripts, with a surprisingly enlivening effect. Clauses and phrases are divided as he meant to emphasize them, often giving the effect of lines of poetry. But it is a warm, down-to-earth poetry addressed to the heart of the common man.

The first sermon, "The Tap on the Shoulder," shares with his congregation the story of his life, in which each change, each decision, was arrived at only when he had become sure it was the will of God for him. His wife writes in her introduction: "Since part of God's plan for him was coming to this country, one whole side of his personality would never have been developed had he missed that Master Plan and stayed in Scotland. He had a depth of feeling for his adopted country which few native-born Americans ever have. This sprang partly from his passionate conviction about America's God-appointed destiny and partly from his overflowing gratitude for all this country had done for him."

In *Contemporary Thinking About Paul*, Professor Kepler has given us another of his admirable anthologies. He has included fifty-five selections bearing on Paul's life and work, from as many authors, all contemporary or near-contemporary; many schools of thought are sampled, and various unusual and penetrating viewpoints made available within one volume. A full bibliography is given for further study, also a biographical index of authors. The material is assembled under five headings: "The Religious Atmosphere of Paul's World," "Biographical Data—The Man and His Experience," "The Letters of Paul," "Insights into Pauline Theology," "Modern Evaluations of Paul." Great scholars who have formed the present generation's thinking are found here: Rudolf Otto, Albert Schweitzer, Adolf Deissmann, T. R. Glover, Maurice Goguel, George F. Moore, James Moffatt, Karl Barth, Anders Nygren; as well as many whom we know more closely as active among us today: Cadbury, Goodspeed, McCown, Craig, Knox, Dodd, Rall, Wilder. Such a compendium seems especially useful to the active minister who wishes to "brush up" on Paul and who has not the leisure to work through a whole library.

E. H. L.